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A
PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL
I S T O R Y
OF THE
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
OF THE
E U R O P E A N S
IN THE
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

Translated from the French of the

A B B É R A Y N A L,

By J. JUSTAMOND, M. A.

THE THIRD EDITION:
REVISED AND CORRECTED.
WITH MAPS ADAPTED TO THE WORK,
AND A COPIOUS INDEX.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

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M D C C L X X V I I.

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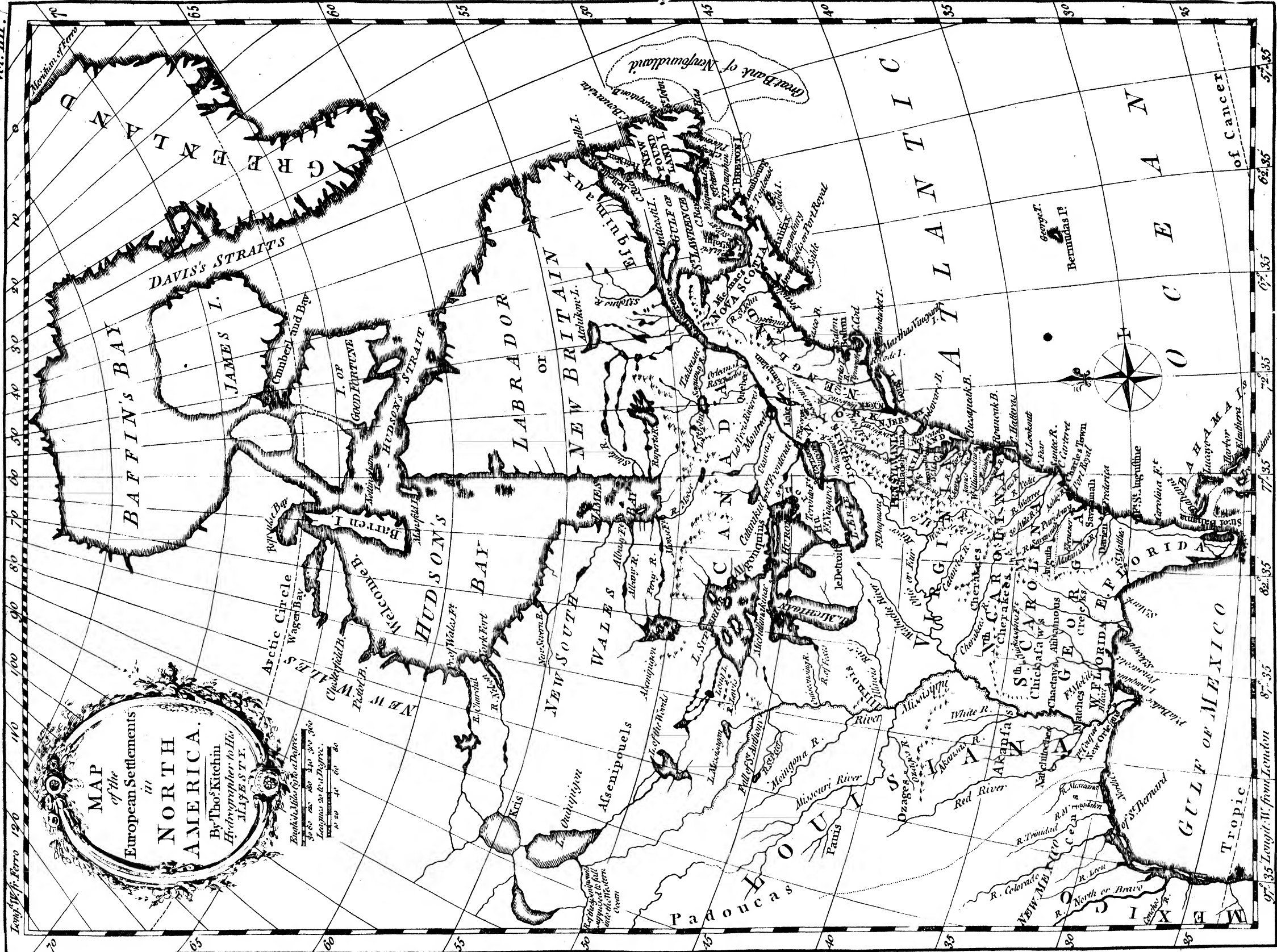
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A

PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL

H I S T O R Y

O F T H E

SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE

O F T H E

E U R O P E A N S

I N T H E

EAST AND WEST INDIES.

B O O K XII.

*Settlements of the Spaniards, the Dutch, and the
Danes, in the American islands.*

THE honour of having discovered the great Archipelago of the Caribbee islands, and of having formed the first settlements on them, is due to Spain. The most advanced of these from the American continent is called Trinidad. Columbus landed on it in 1498, when he discovered the Orinooko; but other objects interfering, both the island and the coasts of the neighbouring continent were at that time neglected. But the lustre of the

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gold,

B O O K
XII.

A Spanish colony formed on the banks of the Orinooko. The use that has been, and may be, made of it.

gold, which had been seen from a distance glittering on the shore, caused them to be re-visited by the nation which had first made the discovery. The conquest of those immense regions, which are watered by one of the largest and richest rivers of the universe, was resolved upon ; and the island of Trinidad, situated at the mouth of the Oronooko, was peopled, in order to insure and facilitate the execution of so great an enterprise. An island has always the advantage of a continent, when, having but a small extent of country to defend, it has a very large one to attack ; as was the case in the present instance.

THE river Oronooko, which, as is commonly believed, springs from the Cordeleras, after being increased in a course of five hundred and seventy-five leagues by the influx of a great number of rivers of different magnitude, empties itself into the ocean by more than fifty channels. Its impetuosity is so great, that it stems the most powerful tides, and preserves the freshness of its waters to the distance of twelve leagues from that vast and deep channel within which it was confined. But this rapidity is not always equal, and owes its variations to a circumstance, perhaps, entirely peculiar. The Oronooko, in the month of April, begins to swell, and continues to rise during five months ; the sixth it remains at its greatest height ; in October, it begins to subside, and falls gradually till the month of March, during which it continues in a fixed state of its greatest diminution. These alternate changes are regular even to certainty.

This

THIS phenomenon, the cause of which is not known, seems to depend much more on the sea than on the land. In the six months that the river is rising, the hemisphere of the new world presents nothing but seas, at least but little land, to the perpendicular action of the rays of the sun. In the six months of its fall, America exhibits nothing but dry land to the planet by which it is illuminated. The sea, at this time, is less subject to the influence of the sun, or, at least, its current towards the eastern shore is more balanced, more broken by the land, and must, therefore, leave a freer course to the rivers, which, not being then so strongly confined by the sea, cannot be swelled but by rains, or by the melting of the snows from the Cordeleras. Perhaps, indeed, the rising of the waters of the Oronooko may depend entirely on the rainy season. But to be thoroughly acquainted with the causes of so singular a phenomenon, it would be necessary to consider, how far the course of this river may be affected by that of the Amazons, and to know the track and direction both of the one and the other. From the difference of their situation, their source, and their opening into the sea, it is not improbable, that the cause of so remarkable a difference in the periods of their flux and reflux might be discovered. All things are connected in this worldly system. The courses of rivers depend either on the diurnal or annual revolutions of the earth. Whenever an enlightened people shall acquire a knowledge of the banks of the Oronooko, they will discover,

or, at least, they will attempt to discover, the causes of these phenomena. But their endeavours will be attended with difficulties. The river is not so navigable as it might be presumed from its magnitude; its bed is in many places filled up with rocks, which oblige the navigator at times to carry both his boats and the merchandise they are laden with.

THE people who border on this river, but little distant from the burning Line, inhabiting a country, perhaps, too fruitful to have been cultivated, know neither the trouble of clothes, the restraints of police, nor the burthen of government. Free under the yoke of poverty, they live chiefly by hunting and fishing, and on wild fruits. But little of their time or labour can be spent on agriculture, where they have nothing but a stick to plough with, and hatchets made of stone to cut down trees, which, being burned or rotted, leave the soil in a proper state for bearing.

THE state of servitude in which the women are kept in the new world, is undoubtedly the principal cause of the want of population in this part of the globe. This tyranny, which is universal, is more prevalent on the banks of the Oronooko, than in any other place. There are, therefore, few inhabitants in these countries, though greatly favoured by nature. Mothers have contracted the custom of destroying the daughters they bring forth, by cutting the navel-string so close to the body, that the children die of a hæmorrhage. Christianity itself has not even been able to put a
stop

stop to this abominable practice. The Jesuit Gumilla confirms this fact; who, being informed that one of his converts had been guilty of such a murder, went to her in order to reproach her of her crime in the strongest terms. The woman listened to the missionary without shewing the least signs of emotion. When he had finished his remonstrance, she desired leave to answer him; which she did in the following manner:

“ WOULD to God, O Father! would to God, “ that, at the instant of my birth, my mother had “ shewed love and compassion enough for her child, “ to spare me all the evils I have endured, and “ those I shall still suffer to the end of my life! If “ my mother had destroyed me at my birth, I “ should have been dead, but I should not have “ been sensible of my death; and should have “ escaped the most miserable of conditions. How “ many afflictions have I already experienced! and “ who knows what I have still to endure!

“ REPRESENT to yourself, O Father, the troubles “ that are reserved for an Indian woman among “ these Indians. They accompany us into the “ fields with their bow and arrows; while we go “ there laden with an infant which we carry in a “ basket, and another which we carry at our breast. “ They go to kill birds, or to catch fish; while “ we are employed in digging the ground, and, “ after having gone through all the labours of the “ culture, are obliged also to bear those of the “ harvest. They return in the evening without “ any burden, and we bring them roots for their

“ food, and maize for their drink. As soon as
 “ they come home, they go and amuse themselves
 “ with their friends ; while we are fetching wood
 “ and water to prepare their supper. When they
 “ have eaten, they fall asleep ; and we pass almost
 “ the whole night in grinding the maize and in
 “ preparing the chica for them. And what reward
 “ have we for these labours ? They drink ; and,
 “ when they are intoxicated, they drag us by the
 “ hair, and trample us under foot.

“ O FATHER, would to God that my mother had
 “ destroyed me at the instant of my birth ! Thou
 “ knowest thyself that our complaints are just.
 “ Thou hast daily instances before thine eyes of the
 “ truth of what I say. But the greatest misfortune
 “ we labour under it is impossible thou shouldst
 “ know. It is a melancholy circumstance for a poor
 “ Indian woman to serve her husband as a slave
 “ in the fields, wearied out with fatigue, and at
 “ home deprived of tranquillity : but it is a dread-
 “ ful thing, when twenty years are elapsed, to see
 “ him take another woman, whose judgment is not
 “ formed. He attaches himself to her. She beats
 “ us, and our children ; she commands us, and
 “ treats us as her servants ; and, if the least murmur
 “ escapes us, a stick raised—Oh ! Father, how is it
 “ possible that we should bear this condition !
 “ What can an Indian woman do better than to
 “ prevent her child from living in a state of slavery,
 “ infinitely worse than death ! Would to God,
 “ O Father, I repeat it, that my mother had con-
 “ ceived

“ceived affection enough for me to bury me when
“I was born! my heart would not have been thus
“afflicted; nor would my eyes have been accus-
“tomed to tears.”

AMONG the several small nations that wander about in these immense regions, there is one in which the nature of the soil has rendered the fate of the women less wretched. The people of this nation, are those that inhabit a cluster of islands, formed by the different mouths of the Oronooko. Their country, though under water during the six months of the year that the river is swelling, and though overflowed throughout the rest of the year twice a day by the tide, is preferred by them to any other. They have continued to live there without risque, by building their huts upon very high stakes, which they sink very deep into the mud. The palm-tree, which grows over this sandy soil, supplies these mild, chearful, and sociable savages with their food, drink, furniture, and canoes.

It was not till the year 1535 that the Spaniards thought of paying another visit to the river Oronooko. Having been disappointed in their search after mines, they considered it of so little importance, that they never formed more than one small settlement upon it. This is situated at the lower part of the river, and is called St. Thomas. The first colonists applied themselves with so much ardour to the cultivation of tobacco, that they delivered annually ten cargoes to the Dutch. This intercourse having been prohibited by the mother-country, the town, which hath also been twice



sacked by privateers, insensibly fell into decay. The whole employment of the place, at present, is to breed a few cattle, which they send to Cumana by an inland communication.

THESE vast and fertile regions would soon emerge from their present obscurity, if Spain knew how to avail herself of the active ambition of the Jesuits. It is well known that these men, admirable as a society, dangerous in a political, and detestable in a religious view, had succeeded so far as to draw from the midst of their forests a great number of wild natives; to settle them on the banks of the Oronooko, and other rivers, most of which are navigable, that fall into it; and to instil into them some social principles, and some taste for some of the more necessary arts, particularly agriculture. These people already cultivate sugar, cotton, tobacco, and cocoa, for their own consumption: would it not be possible to induce them to increase the growth of these commodities, by offering them others in exchange? The distance between a savage and a social state is immense; but, from the infancy of society to a flourishing state of commerce, there are but few steps to make. Time, as it improves the strength, makes the interval appear less. Spain would be enriched by her traffic with these new plantations, whose produce might be carried to Trinidad; and thus that island would be restored to its original destination.

Settlement
of the Spaniards at
Trinidad,
and at
Margareta.

BUT, besides the serving as a staple, its extent, the fruitfulness of its soil, and the convenience of its roads, would make it an object in itself of considerable importance. Those who have surveyed it with

with sufficient attention and skill to discern, through the impediments of thick forests with which it is covered, the real value of it, have esteemed it capable of producing in abundance many species of commodities, and even such as bear a high price. Yet, its produce hath been confined merely to cocoa; but this was in such perfection, that it was preferred even to that of Caracca; and the Spanish merchants, in order to secure it, strove to anticipate each other by paying for it in advance. This eagerness, which may sometimes give a spur to the industry of a people naturally active, is certain destruction to those among whom the desire of ease has the force of a passion, and even almost of a necessity, if not of nature at least, of habit. The proprietors, having received more money than they could repay with that single commodity, in which their whole fortune consisted, fell, by degrees, into despair; and, from the dread of unusual toil, gave over all thoughts of labour. Since the year 1727, there hath been no more cocoa to be found on the island; which, from that time, hath had no correspondence with the mother country.

THE same negligence had before ruined Margareta. This island enjoyed a momentary existence and prosperity from a species of wealth drawn from the bottom of the sea which encompassed it. Columbus in 1498 discovered, at the distance of four leagues from the continent, the little isle of Cubagua, afterwards called Pearl Island. The quantities of this treasure, which
nature

nature yielded without any expence, attracted the Spaniards to this place in 1509. They brought with them some savages from the Bahama islands, who had been found not proper for working in the mines, but had a faculty of continuing a long time under water. This talent was employed with so much ardour, that great fortunes were raised in a very small time. The banks of pearl were exhausted, and the colony transferred, in 1524, to Margarettæ, where some of the same kind had just been discovered, and which disappeared in a still shorter time. From this period that island, which is fifteen leagues in length and six in breadth, became more neglected by Spain than Trinidad.

THAT the court of Madrid still maintains possession of these two islands, is more for the sake of keeping nations of greater industry at a distance from the continent, than with a view of deriving any advantage to itself from them. Here is a mixed race, formed between Spaniards and Indian women, who, joining the indolence of the savage to the vices of civilized nations, are sluggards, cheats, and zealots. They live on what fish they catch, and bananas, which nature, out of indulgence as it were to their slothfulness, produces there of a larger size, and better quality than in any other part of the Archipelago. They have a breed of lean and tasteless cattle, with which they carry on a fraudulent traffic to the French colonies, exchanging them for camlets, black veils, linens, silk stockings, white hats, and hard-ware. The number of their vessels does not exceed thirty sloops, without decks.

The

IN THE EAST AND WEST INDIES.

II

The tame cattle of these two islands have filled the woods with a breed that is become wild. The inhabitants shoot them, and cut their flesh into slips of three inches in breadth and one in thickness, which they dry, after having melted the fat out of them, so that they will keep three or four months. This provision, which is called Tassau, is sold in the French settlements for twenty livres * a hundred weight.

B O O K.
XII.
}

ALL the money which the government sends to these two islands, falls into the hands of the commandants, the officers civil and military, and the monks. The remainder of the people, who do not amount to more than sixteen hundred, live in a state of the most deplorable poverty. In time of war they furnish about two hundred men, who, for the sake of plunder, offer themselves without distinction to any of the colonies that happen to be fitting out cruizers for sea.

THE inhabitants of Porto-Rico are of a different turn. This island, which is situated in the center of the Antilles, is forty leagues in length, and twenty in its greatest breadth. Though it was discovered and visited by Columbus in 1493, the Spaniards neglected it till 1509, when thirst of gold brought them thither from St. Domingo, under the command of Ponce de Leon, to make a conquest, which afterwards cost them dear.

Spanish
settlement
at Porto-
Rico.

It is generally known, that the use of poisoned arms is of the highest antiquity. In most countries

* 17s. 6d.

it preceded the invention of steel. When darts headed with stone, bones of fish or other animals, proved insufficient to repel the attacks of wild beasts, men had recourse to poisonous juices, which, from being originally designed merely for the chase, were afterwards employed in war against their own species. Ambition and revenge set no limits to their outrages, till ages had been spent in drowning whole nations in rivers of blood. When it was discovered that this effusion of blood produced no advantage, and that, in proportion as the stream swelled in its course, it depopulated countries, and left nothing but deserts without animation and without culture; they then came to an agreement to moderate in some degree the thirst of shedding it. They established what are called the laws of war; that is to say, injustice in injustice, or the interest of kings in the massacre of the people. They do not now cut the throats of all their victims at once; but reserve some few of the herd to propagate the breed. These laws of war, or of nations, required the abolition of certain abuses in the art of killing. Where fire-arms are to be had, poisoned weapons are forbidden; and, when cannon balls will answer the end, chewed bullets are not allowed. O! race, unworthy both of heaven or earth, destructive, tyrannical being, man, or devil rather, wilt thou never cease to torment this globe, where thou existest but for a moment! Will thy wars never end but with the annihilation of thy species! Go then; if thou wouldst advance thy mischief, go and provide thyself with the poisons of the new world.

OF

OF all the regions, productive of venomous plants, none abounded so much in them as South-America, which owed this malignant fertility to a soil in general rank, as if it was purging itself from the slime of a deluge.

THE plants called Lianes, of which there were vast numbers in all damp and marshy places, furnished the poison, which was in universal request on the continent. The method of preparing it was by cutting them in pieces, then boiling them in water, till the liquor had acquired the consistence of a syrup. After this they dipped their arrows in it, which were immediately impregnated with the poisonous quality. During several ages, the savages in general used these arms in their wars with each other. At length many of those nations, from the deficiency of their numbers, found the necessity of renouncing so destructive a weapon, and reserved it for beasts, whether large or small, which they could not overtake or overcome. Any animal, whose skin has been raised with one of these poisoned arrows, dies a minute after, without any sign of convulsion or pain. This is not occasioned by the coagulation of the blood, which was a long time the general opinion; recent experiments have proved, that this poison, mixed with blood newly drawn and warm, prevents it from coagulating, and even preserves it some time from putrefaction. It is probable, that the effect of these juices is upon the nervous system. Some travellers have imputed the origin of the venereal disease among the inhabitants of the new world,

to the habit of eating game killed with these poisoned arms. At present it is universally known, that the flesh of such animals may be eaten for a continuance without any ill effect.

IN the American islands, the natives draw their poison from trees more than from the Lianes ; and of all the venomous sorts of trees, the most deadly is the mancheneel. Its trunk, which is never more than two feet in circumference, is covered with a smooth tender bark. Its flowers are of a reddish cast. Its fruit is of the colour of a peach, and has a stone in the middle. The leaves of it are like those of the laurel, and contain a milky fluid. In the heat of the day it is dangerous to handle them, on account of the moisture which exudes from their pores ; and still more dangerous to repose under them, from the prodigious quantity of dust that falls from the innumerable flowers borne by these trees. Incisions being made in the trunk of them, shells are placed under to receive the sap ; as soon as it is grown a little thick, they steep the points of their arrows in it, which acquire from thence the property of conveying sudden death, be the wound ever so slight. This poison, as appears by experience, preserves its venomous quality above a hundred years. Of all the spots where this tree is found, Porto-Rico is that in which it delights most, and where it is found in the greatest abundance. Why were not the first conquerors of America all shipwrecked on this island ? It is the misfortune of both worlds that they became acquainted with it so late, and that they

they did not there meet with the death which their avarice merited.

The mancheneel seems to have been fatal only to the Americans. The inhabitants of the island where it grows, used it to repel the Caribs, who made frequent descents on their coasts. The same arms they might have employed against the Europeans; and, as the Spaniards were ignorant at that time that salt, applied immediately, is an infallible cure, they would probably have fallen a sacrifice to the first effects of this poison. But they did not meet with the least resistance from the savage inhabitants of the island. They had been informed of what had occurred in the conquest of the neighbouring isles; and they regarded these strangers as a superior order of beings, to whose chains they voluntarily submitted themselves. It was not long, however, before they wished to shake off the intolerable yoke which had been imposed on them, and postponed the enterprise only till they could be assured whether their tyrants were immortal. A Cacique, named Broyo, was intrusted with this commission.

CHANCE favoured his design, by bringing to him Salzedo, a young Spaniard, who was travelling. He received him with great respect, and at his departure sent some Indians to attend him on his way, and to serve him in the quality of guides. When they came to the bank of a river, which they were to pass, one of these savages took him on his shoulder to carry him over. As soon as they had got into the midst of it, he threw him

into the water, and, with the assistance of his companions, kept him there till there was no appearance of life. They then dragged him to the bank ; but, as they were still in doubt whether he was dead or living, they begged pardon a thousand times for the accident that had happened. This farce lasted three days ; till at length being convinced, by the stench of the corpse, that it was possible for Spaniards to die, the Indians rose on all sides upon their oppressors, and massacred a hundred of them.

PONCE de Leon immediately assembled all the Castilians who had escaped, and, without loss of time, fell upon the savages, who were terrified with this sudden attack. In proportion as the number of their enemies increased, their panic became more violent. They had even the folly to believe, that these Spaniards which were just arrived from St. Domingo, were the same that had been killed, and were come to life again to fight them. Under this ridiculous persuasion, dreading to continue a war with men who revive after their death, they submitted once more to the yoke, and, being condemned to the mines, in a short time fell martyrs to the toils of slavery.

SUCH acts of barbarity by no means promoted the interests of Spain. An island of considerable extent, enriched by a great number of rivers, fruitful, though unequal ; furnished with an excellent port, and coasts of easy access : this island, the possession of which would have made the fortune of an active nation, is scarcely known in the world. The inhabitants amount barely to fifteen

hundred, including Spaniards, Mestees, and Mulattoes. They have about three thousand negroes, whose employment is rather to gratify the indolence, than to assist the industry, of the proprietors. Both masters and slaves, brought nearly upon a footing by their sloth, subsist alike on maize, potatoes, and cassava. If they cultivate sugar, tobacco, and cocoa, it is only so much of each as is necessary for their own consumption. Their exports consist of about two thousand skins, which they furnish annually to the mother country, and a considerable number of mules, good in their kind, but small; such as are usually found in broken and mountainous countries. These mules are smuggled into Santa-Cruz, Jamaica, and St. Domingo. This colony is protected in its idleness by a garrison of two hundred men; which, with the clergy and civil officers, cost government 250,000 livres*. This money, added to what they get for their cattle, is sufficient to pay the English, Dutch, French, and Danes, for the linens and other merchandise they supply. All the advantage the mother country derives from this settlement, is to take in water and fresh provisions there for the fleets she sends to the new world.

IF Spain hath so little consideration of her own interests, as to neglect the advantage which she might draw from an island of such importance, at least she ought to permit such of her subjects, as chance hath conducted there, to emerge from that shameful

* Near 11,000*l*.



shameful poverty in which they languish. To render their condition more happy, nothing is wanted but the liberty of a free market for their cattle. They would find pasture for as much as would supply the consumption of all the Caribbee-islands, where the lands are occupied in tillage. The situation of a settlement in the center of those-islands, would be a very favourable circumstance for its trade with them. An open communication with active and enlightened people would excite those colonists who are not so. The desire of partaking in the same enjoyments would inspire the same ardour for business. The court of Madrid would then reap the political fruits of a condescension which humanity alone should dictate to it. Till this liberty of commerce is granted, Porto-Rico will be of no more service to Spain than St. Domingo.

Spanish
settlement
at St. Do-
mingo.

THIS island, famous for being the earliest settlement of the Spaniards in the new world, was at first in high estimation for the quantity of gold it supplied: this wealth diminished with the inhabitants of the country, whom they obliged to dig it out of the bowels of the earth; and the source of it was entirely dried up, when the neighbouring islands no longer supplied the loss of those wretched victims to the avarice of the conqueror. A vehement desire of opening again this source of wealth inspired the thought of getting slaves from Africa; but, besides that these were found unfit for the labours they were destined to, the multitude of mines, which then began to be wrought on the continent, made those of St. Domingo no longer

of any importance. An idea now suggested itself **BOOK**
that their negroes, which were healthy, strong, **XII.**
and patient, might be usefully employed in husbandry; and they adopted, through necessity, a wise resolution, which, had they known their own interest, they would have embraced by choice.

THE produce of their industry was at first extremely small, because the labourers were few. Charles V. who, like most sovereigns, preferred his favourites to every thing, had granted an exclusive right of the slave trade to a Flemish nobleman, who made over his privilege to the Genoese. Those avaricious republicans conducted this infamous commerce as all monopolies are conducted; they resolved to sell dear, and they sold but few. When time and competition had fixed the natural and necessary price of slaves, the number of them increased. It may easily be imagined, that the Spaniards, who had been accustomed to treat the Indians as beasts, though they differed but little in complexion from themselves, did not entertain a higher opinion of these negro Africans, whom they substituted in their place. Degraded still further in their eyes by the price they had paid for them, even religion could not restrain them from aggravating the weight of their servitude. It became intolerable, and these wretched slaves made an effort to recover the unalienable rights of mankind. Their attempt proved unsuccessful; but they reaped this benefit from their despair, that they were afterwards treated with less inhumanity.

THIS moderation (if tyranny cramped by the apprehension of revolt can deserve that name) was attended with good consequences. Cultivation was pursued with some degree of success. Soon after the middle of the sixteenth century, the mother country drew annually from this colony ten million weight of sugar, a large quantity of wood for dying, tobacco, cocoa, cassia, ginger, cotton, and peltry in abundance. One might imagine, that such favourable beginnings would give both the desire and the means of carrying them further; but a train of events, more fatal each than the other, ruined these hopes.

THE first misfortune arose from the depopulation of St. Domingo. The Spanish conquests on the continent should naturally have contributed to promote the success of an island, which nature seemed to have formed to be the center of that vast dominion arising around it, to be the staple of the different colonies. But it fell out quite otherwise: on a view of the immense fortunes raising in Mexico, and other parts, the richest inhabitants of St. Domingo began to despise their settlements, and quitted the true source of riches, which is on the surface of the earth, to go and ransack the bowels of it for veins of gold, which are quickly exhausted. The government endeavoured in vain to put a stop to this emigration; the laws were always either artfully eluded, or openly violated.

THE weakness, which was a necessary consequence of such a conduct, leaving the coasts without

out defence, encouraged the enemies of Spain to ravage them. Even the capital of this island was taken and pillaged by that celebrated English sailor, Francis Drake. The cruizers of less consequence contented themselves with intercepting vessels in their passage through those latitudes, the best known at that time of any in the new world. To complete these misfortunes, the Castilians themselves commenced pirates. They attacked no ships but those of their own nation; which were more rich, worse provided, and worse defended, than any others. The custom they had of fitting out ships clandestinely, in order to procure slaves, prevented them from being known; and the assistance they purchased from the ships of war, commissioned to protect the trade, insured to them impunity.

THE foreign trade of the colony was its only resource in this distress; and that was illicit; but as it continued to be carried on, notwithstanding the vigilance of the Governors, or, perhaps, by their connivance, the policy of an exasperated and short-sighted court exerted itself in demolishing most of the sea-ports, and driving the miserable inhabitants into the inland country. This act of violence threw them into a state of dejection; which the incursions and settlement of the French on the island afterwards carried to the utmost pitch.

SPAIN, totally taken up with that vast empire which she had formed on the continent, used no pains to dissipate this lethargy. She even refused to listen to the solicitations of her Flemish subjects,

who earnestly pressed that they might have permission to clear those fertile lands. Rather than run the risque of seeing them carry on a contraband trade on the coasts, she chose to bury in oblivion a settlement which had been of consequence, and was likely to become so again.

THIS colony, which had no longer any intercourse with the mother country but by a single ship of no great burthen, received from thence every third year, consisted in 1717 of eighteen thousand four hundred and ten inhabitants, including Spaniards, Mestees, negroes, or Mulattoes. The complexion and character of these people differed according to the different proportions of American, European, and African blood they had received from that natural and transient union which restores all races and conditions to the same level; for love is not more a respecter of persons than death. These demi-savages, plunged in the extreme of sloth, lived upon fruits and roots, dwelt in cottages without furniture, and most of them without clothes. The few among them, in whom indolence had not totally suppressed the sense of decency, and taste for the conveniences of life, purchased clothes of their neighbours the French, in return for their cattle, and the money sent to them for the maintenance of two hundred soldiers, the priests, and the government. It does not appear that the company, formed at Barcelona in 1757, with exclusive privileges for the re-establishment of St. Domingo, hath as yet made any considerable progress. They send out only two small vessels annually, which
are

are freighted back with six thousand hides, and some other commodities of little value.

ST. Domingo, the capital of the colony, and the place where this traffic is carried on, is situated on the side of a plain thirty leagues in length, and from eight to twelve in breadth. This large tract, which, properly cultivated, would furnish provisions to the amount of twenty millions *, is covered with forests and under-wood, with some pasture land interspersed at intervals, which serves for a considerable number of cattle. This spot, which is level throughout almost its whole extent, becomes unequal in the neighbourhood of the town, which is built on the banks of the Lozama. Some magnificent ruins are all the remains of the once-flourishing state of this celebrated city. On the land-side, it has no fortification but a simple wall, without either ditch or outworks; but towards the river and the sea it is well defended. Such is the only settlement the Spaniards have kept up on the southern coast.

On the north there is one called Monte Christo. Happily this maritime and commercial place hath had no connexion with Spain. It owes its trade to the vicinity of the French plantations. In time of peace, the produce of the plain of Mariboux, situated between fort Dauphin and bay Mancheneel, is all carried to this port, which is constantly filled with English smugglers. When there is a rupture between the courts of London and Versailles, without

* 875,000l.

out engaging that of Madrid, Monte Christo becomes a very considerable market ; for all the northern part of the French colony send their commodities thither, where they never fail of meeting with ships ready to take them off ; but, the moment Spain finds herself called upon to take a part in the disputes between the two rival nations, this trade ceases.

THE Spaniards have no settlement in the western part of the island, which is entirely occupied by the French ; and it is not above nine or ten years since they thought of settling to the eastward, which they had long entirely neglected.

THE project of cultivation, which accidentally found its way into the council at Madrid, might be carried into execution in the plain of Vega-Real, which is situated in the inland part, and is fourscore leagues in length, by ten in its greatest breadth. It would be difficult to find throughout the new world a spot more level, more fruitful, or better watered. All the productions of America would succeed admirably there ; but it would be impossible to remove them from thence without making roads ; which is an undertaking that would stagger nations more enterprising than the Spaniards. These difficulties should naturally have led them to fix their eyes on the plains of St. Domingo, which are fruitful, though not in so great a degree as those of Vega-Real. Probably they were apprehensive, that the new colonists would adopt the manners of the old, and therefore determined upon Samana.

SAMANA is a peninsula on the eastern part of the island, five leagues broad, and sixteen long ; and is joined to the continent by a narrow slip of very marshy ground. It forms a bay of fourteen leagues in length, where the anchorage is in fourteen fathom, and so commodious that the ships may lie close to the shore. This bay is full of little islands, which it is easy to keep clear of by steering close to the western coast. Besides the possession of a fertile, though not a level soil, this neck of land affords a situation very advantageous for trade, and for bringing the ships that come from Europe close to the shore.

THESE considerations induced the first adventurers from France, who ravaged St. Domingo, to settle at Samana ; where they maintained their ground a long time, though surrounded by their enemies. At length, it was found that they were too much exposed, and at too great a distance from the rest of the French settlements on the island, which were every day improving. In consequence of this they were recalled. The Spaniards rejoiced at their départure ; but did not take possession of the spot they had quitted.

WITHIN these few years, however, they have sent thither some people from the Canaries ; the state was at the expence of the voyage, and of their maintenance for several years. These measures, prudent as they were, have not been attended with success. The new inhabitants have for the most part fallen victims to the climate, to the clearing of the ground, and, above all, to the arbitrary impositions

impositions of the governors, whose military turn is ever fatal to colonies. Of these strangers the few that survive so many evils languish under the expectation of approaching death. Such unsuccessful beginnings promise no very fortunate conclusions. St. Domingo is likely to continue, as far as concerns the Spaniards, in the same feeble state they have left it till now. Nature and fortune will make them amends by Cuba.

Spanish colony formed at Cuba. Importance of that Island.

THE island of Cuba, which is separated from St. Domingo by a narrow channel, is of itself equal in value to a kingdom: it is two hundred and fifty leagues in length, and in breadth from fifteen to twenty and thirty. Though it was discovered by Columbus in 1492, the Spaniards did not attempt to make themselves masters of it till 1511, when Diego de Valesquez came with four ships and landed on the eastern point.

THIS district was under the government of a Cacique named Hatuey. He was a native of St. Domingo, or Hispaniola, and had retired hither to avoid the slavery to which his countrymen were condemned. Those, who could escape the tyranny of the Castilians, had followed him in his retreat, where he formed a little state, and ruled in peace. At a distance he observed the Spanish sails, whose approach he dreaded. On the first news he received of their arrival, he called together the bravest Indians, both of his subjects and allies, to animate them to a defence of their liberty; assuring them, at the same time, that all their efforts would be ineffectual, if they did not first render the God of their enemies

enemies propitious to them: *Behold him there,* BOOK
XII. said he, pointing to a vessel filled with gold, *behold that mighty divinity, let us invoke his aid!*

THIS simple and credulous people easily believed, that gold, for the sake of which so much blood was shed, was the god of the Spaniards. They danced and sang before the rude and unfashioned ore, and resigned themselves wholly to its protection.

BUT Hatuey, more enlightened, and more suspicious than the other Caciques, assembled them again. *We must not,* said he to them, *expect any happiness so long as the god of the Spaniards remains among us. He is no less our enemy than they. They seek for him in every place; and where they find him, there they establish themselves. Were he hidden in the cavities of the earth, they would discover him. Were we to swallow him, they would plunge their hands into our bowels, and drag him out. There is no place but the bottom of the sea, that can elude their search. When he is no longer among us, doubtless we shall be forgotten by them.* As soon as he had done speaking, every man brought out his gold, and threw it into the sea.

Notwithstanding this, the Spaniards advanced. Their muskets and cannons, those tremendous deities, dispersed with their thunder the savages, who endeavoured to resist: but, as Hatuey might re-assemble them, he was pursued through the woods, taken, and condemned to be burned. When he was fastened to the stake, and waited only for the kindling of the fire, an inhuman priest advanced to propose the ceremony of baptism, and to speak to him

him of paradise. *Are there,* said the Cacique, *any Spaniards in that happy place? Yes,* replied the missionary; *but there are none but good ones. The best of them,* returned Hatuey, *are good for nothing. I will not go to a place, where I should be in danger of meeting one of them. Talk no more to me of your religion, but leave me to die.*

THUS was the Cacique burned, the God of the Christians dishonoured, and his cross imbrued with human blood; but Velasquez found no more enemies to oppose him. All the Caciques hastened to do homage to him. After the mines had been opened, and it was found that they did not answer, the inhabitants of Cuba, being become useless, were exterminated; for, at that time, to conquer was to destroy. One of the largest islands in the world did not cost the Spaniards a single man: but what profit have they drawn from the conquest of Cuba?

THE settlement they have formed upon this island may be considered in three views, each of which merits a serious attention. The first is, on account of the produce of the country, which is considerable; the second, as being the staple of a great trade; and the third, as being the key to the new world.

THE principal growth of this vast island is naturally cotton. This shrub, at the time of the conquest, was very common there. The preservation of it required little expence or labour; and the general dryness of the soil adapted it particularly to this purpose. The commodity, however, is now
become

become so scarce, that sometimes several years pass without any of it being sent to Europe.

ALTHOUGH the Spaniards have an insurmountable antipathy to imitation, yet they have of late adopted the cultivation of coffee at Cuba, having observed the rapid progress it made in the neighbouring islands. But, in borrowing the commodity from foreign colonists, they have not borrowed their diligence in improving it. Their whole produce of coffee barely amounts to thirty or five and thirty thousand weight, one third of which is exported to Vera Cruz, and the rest to Madrid. One should naturally conclude, that the growth of this plant will increase, in proportion as the use of a liquor so familiar to people in hot climates shall become more common among the Spaniards; but a nation, which was the first to introduce into Europe a taste for coffee, and the last to adopt it both in Europe and America, will be slow in all its improvements, as it is in every kind of invention. The propagation of coffee requires that of sugar; it may be worth while, therefore, to inquire how far the Spaniards are prepared by the one for the other.

SUGAR, which is the richest and most valuable production of America, would of itself be sufficient to give to Cuba that flourishing state of prosperity, every source and channel of which nature seems to have opened for her. Although the surface of the island is in general unequal and mountainous, yet it has plains sufficiently extensive, and sufficiently watered, to supply the consumption of the greatest

part of Europe in that article. The incredible fruitfulness of its new lands, if properly managed, would enable it to surpass every other nation, however they may have got the start of it; their labour of more than half a century, spent in bringing their works to perfection, would end in this, that a rival, by taking up their method, would outstrip them, and in less than twenty years engross the whole of their profits. But the Spanish colony is so jealous of their superiority, that to this day they have but few plantations, where, with the finest cares, they make at a great expence but a small quantity of sugar, and that of a coarser sort. This serves partly for the Mexican market, and partly for the mother country; which, instead of making a gold mine, as it should do, of its sugar trade, buys to the value of more than five millions* of livres at foreign markets.

It has probably been expected, that the tobacco imported from Cuba would compensate this loss; for after furnishing Mexico and Peru, there was sufficient, with the little brought from Caracca and Buenos Ayres, to supply the demands of all Spain. The greatest part comes there in leaf. That which is cured in the country by Pedro Alonzo, has been, and is still held in the highest esteem. This Spaniard, the only one, perhaps, who has enriched himself by a truly useful branch of industry, has gained in this trade between twelve and fifteen millions of livres†. If the government


* £. 218,750.

† From about 500,000*l.* to 650,000*l.* sterling.

vernment had listened to this active citizen, the national wealth would have been augmented by the increased growth of a plant, which caprice renders so valuable. The decay of this trade is solely owing to the negligence of the court of Madrid in not gratifying the general taste of Europe for tobacco from the Havannah.

THE Spanish colonies have an universal trade in skins. Cuba supplies annually ten or twelve thousand. The number might be easily increased in a country abounding with wild cattle, where some gentlemen possess on the coasts, and in the inland parts, large tracts of land, which for want of population can scarcely be applied to any other purpose than that of breeding cattle.

It would be saying too much to assert, that the hundredth part of this island is cleared: there are only some traces of cultivation of St. Jago, a port to the windward of the colony, and at Matanga, a safe and spacious bay at the mouth of the old canal. The true plantations are all confined to the beautiful plains of the Havannah, and even these are not what they ought to be.

ALL these plantations together may employ about five and twenty thousand male and female slaves, of every age. The number of whites, mestees, mulattoes, and free negroes, upon the whole island, amounts to near thirty thousand. The food of these different species of inhabitants consists of excellent pork, detestable beef (both in great plenty and exceedingly cheap), and manioc. Even the troops have no other bread than the
 cassava.

cassava. The habit of seeing Europeans frequently at Cuba has, probably, preserved the inhabitants from that languid state of inaction which prevails in all the other Spanish colonies in the new world. It must be further observed, that the people are less mixed, their dress more decent, and their manners better regulated, than in the other islands.

THE state of the colony would be still more flourishing, if its productions had not been made the property of a company, whose exclusive privilege operates as a constant and invariable principle of discouragement. The less industrious a nation is inclined to be, the more careful it ought to be to avoid every measure that may tend to obstruct the progress of the more active and laborious part of the people.

If any thing could supply the want of an open trade, and atone for the grievances occasioned by this monopoly at Cuba, it would be the advantage this island has always enjoyed of being the rendezvous of almost all the Spanish vessels that sail to the new world. This practice commenced almost with the colony itself. Ponce de Leon, having made an attempt upon Florida in 1512, became acquainted with the new canal of Bahama. It was immediately discovered, that this would be the best route the ships bound from Mexico to Europe could possibly take; and in consequence of this was formed the settlement at the Havannah, which is but two small days journey from the canal.

tanal. This port was afterwards found very convenient for vessels dispatched from Carthagena and Porto-Bello, which in a short time pursued the same course; always putting in there and waiting for each other, that they might arrive together in greater state at the mother country. The vast sums expended during their stay, by sailors whose cargoes consisted of the richest treasures of the universe, made the city abound in money. The number of its inhabitants, which in 1561 consisted only of three hundred families, and was nearly doubled at the beginning of the seventeenth century, amounts at present to ten thousand souls.

ONE part of them is employed in the dock-yards, formerly erected by government for building ships of war. As to the masts, iron, and cables, they are brought from Europe; the other materials are found in abundance upon the island. But that which is most valuable is the timber, which, growing under the influence of the hottest rays of the sun, lasts with moderate care for whole centuries; whereas European ships dry and split under the torrid zone. This wood begins to be scarce in the neighbourhood of the Havannah; but it is common on all the coasts, and the transportation of it is neither dear nor difficult. Spain is the more interested to multiply its docks, as the seas most frequented by its shipping, all lie between the tropics. There is still another motive for making the yards at the Havannah the principal resource of its naval power, and that is, the pains which are now taking to render this key to all its

colonies impregnable. The importance of this undertaking may perhaps make the detail of it not disagreeable.

EVERY one knows, that the harbour of the Havannah is one of the safest in the universe; that the fleets of the whole world might ride at anchor there together; that the water is excellent and easily procured. The entrance is secured by rocks, which make it necessary to keep an exact course, in order to avoid striking on them. It is become more difficult since the year 1762, when three men of war were sunk there. This precaution has proved detrimental only to the Spaniards, who have not yet been able to weigh up those large vessels; and there was the less reason for it, as the enemy would not have attempted to force their way into the harbour, which was defended by the Moro and the fort on the point. The former of these fortresses is raised so high above the sea, that even a first rate man of war could not batter it. The other has not the same advantage; but then it cannot be attacked but by a very narrow channel, where the warmest assailants could never withstand the numerous and formidable artillery of the Moro.

THE Havannah, therefore, can only be attacked on the land side. Fifteen or sixteen thousand men, which are the most that could be employed in this service, would not be sufficient to invest the works, which cover a vast extent. Their efforts must be directed either to the right or left of the port, against the town or the Moro. If the latter, they may easily land within a league of the fort,

and will come within sight of it, without difficulty, by good roads, through woods which will cover and secure their march.

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THE first difficulty will be that of getting water, which in the neighbourhood of the camp the assailants must choose is mortal. To fetch such as is drinkable, they must go in boats to the distance of three leagues, and it will be necessary to send a considerable force for this purpose to the only river where it is to be had, or to leave a detachment there in intrenchments; which being at a distance from the camp, without communication or support, will be in perpetual danger of being cut off.

PREVIOUS to the attack of the Moro, the enemy must make themselves masters of the Cavagna, which has been lately built. It is a crown work, composed of a bastion, two curtains, and two demi-bastions in front. Its right and left lie upon the bank of the harbour. It has casemates, reservoirs of water, and powder magazines that are bomb-proof; a good covered way, and a wide ditch cut in the rock. The way which leads to it is composed of stones and pebbles, without any mixture of earth. The Cavagna is placed on an eminence which commands the Moro, but is itself exposed to attacks from a hill which is of an equal height, and not more than three hundred paces distant from it. As it would be easy for an enemy to open their trenches under the cover of this hill, the Spaniards intend to level it; after which the Cavagna may extend its view and its batteries to a great distance. If the garrison should find them-

selves so prest, as not to be able to maintain its post, it would blow up its works, which are all undermined, and retreat into the Moro, the communication with which cannot possibly be cut off.

THE famous fortress of the Moro had towards the sea, on which side it is impregnable, two bastions; and on the land side two others, with a wide and deep ditch cut out of the rock. Since it was taken, it has been entirely rebuilt, and its parapets made higher and thicker. A good covered way has been added, and every thing that was wanting to secure the garrison and the stores. It is not easier to open trenches before this place than the Cavagna. Both of them are built with a soft stone, which will be less dangerous to the defenders than the common sort of free-stone.

INDEPENDENT of these advantages, the two fortresses have in their favour a climate extremely hazardous to besiegers, and an easy communication with the town for receiving all sorts of provisions, without a possibility of being intercepted. Thus circumstanced, these two places may be considered as impregnable, at least as very difficult to be taken, provided they are properly stocked with provisions, and defended with courage and ability. The preservation of them is of so much greater importance, as their loss would necessarily occasion the surrender of the harbour and town, which are both of them commanded and may be battered from these eminences.

AFTER having explained the difficulties of taking the Havannah by attacking the Moro, we must next
speak

speaking of those which must be encountered on the side of the town. BOOK
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It is situated near the bottom of the harbour. It was defended, as well towards the harbour as to the country, by a dry wall, which was good for nothing, and twenty-one bastions, which were not much better. It had a dry ditch, and of little depth. Before this ditch was a kind of covered way almost in ruins. The place, in this state, could not have resisted a sudden attempt, which had it been made in the night, and supported by several attacks, true or false, would certainly have carried it. It is proposed at present to make wide and deep ditches, and to add an exceeding good covered way.

THESE necessary defences will be supported by the fort at the point; which is a square, built of stone, and, though small, is provided with casemates. It has been rebuilt, having been very much damaged during the siege. There is a good dry ditch round it, dug out of the rock. Independent of its principal destination, which is to co-operate with the Moro in defending the port, and for which it is perfectly well calculated; it has several batteries, which open upon the country, and flank some parts of the town wall.

Its fire crosses that of a fort of four bastions, which has a ditch, covered way, powder magazine, casemates, and reservoirs of water. This new fortification, which is erected at three quarters of a mile from the place, on an eminence called Aroftigny, will require a siege in form, if the town is

to be attacked on that side, particularly as it is so constructed as to have a view of the sea, to command a considerable tract on the land side, and to disturb an enemy exceedingly in getting water, which they must fetch from its neighbourhood.

IN skirting the city onward, we come to the fort Daltères, which has been constructed since the siege. It is of stone, has four bastions, a covered way, a half moon before the gate, a wide ditch, a good rampart, reservoirs, casemates, and a powder magazine. It is barely three quarters of a mile distant from the town, and is situated on the other side of a river and an impracticable morass, which cover it in that direction. The rising ground upon which it is built, is entirely occupied by it, and has been insulated by the digging of a broad ditch, into which the sea has a passage from the bottom of the harbour. Besides its commanding the communication between the town and the interior part of the island, it defends the circuit of the place by crossing its fires with those of Arostigny. The Spaniards are going to construct a large redoubt in the interval of these two forts, which will be an additional protection to the town. The Daltères also crosses its fire with that of the Moro, which is very high, and situated at the extreme point of the fort.

SUCH a continuation of works, which will require a garrison of four thousand men, and may be finished in two or three years, cost Spain immense sums. The purchase of the mere materials cost her at first ten millions *; the employment of them

annually

* Above 430,000*l.* sterling.

annually amounts to six or seven *. Four thousand blacks in the service of the government, and a number of Mexicans, condemned to the public works, are the instruments of this undertaking. They might have hastened the end of the toils of so many victims, if they would have permitted the troops to take a share of the burthen, which they wished, as a means to rescue them from that dreadful indigence under which they languish.

IF it were allowable to form an opinion upon a subject, which our profession does not give us a right to understand, we might venture to assert, that when all these works shall be finished, those who would undertake the siege of the Havannah, should begin by the Cavagna and the Moro; because, these forts once taken, the town must of course surrender, or be destroyed by the artillery of the Moro. On the contrary, if they should determine for the town side, the besiegers would scarcely find themselves in a better condition, even after they had taken it. Indeed, they would have it in their power to destroy the dock-yards, and the ships that might happen to be in the harbour; but this would produce no permanent advantage. In order to establish themselves, they must still be obliged to take the Cavagna and the Moro, which in all probability they would find impossible, after the loss they must have sustained in the attack of the town and its fortresses.

* About 285,000 *l.* on an average,

BUT whatever plan may be pursued in the siege of this place, the assailants will not only have to combat the numerous garrison inclosed within its works; there will be a corps likewise, which will take the field, and continually interrupt their operations. This small army will be composed of two squadrons of European dragoons, well mounted, armed and disciplined, and a company of a hundred migrelets. To these may be added all the inhabitants of the island, whites, mulattoes, and free negroes, who are regimented to the number of ten thousand men; but as the greatest part of them have no idea of discipline, they would only create confusion. This, however, will not be the case with a regiment of cavalry of four squadrons, and seven battalions of militia, which, since the peace, they have accustomed to perform their manœuvres with astonishing regularity. These troops armed, cloathed, and accounted at the expence of the government, and paid in time of war upon the footing of regulars, are trained and commanded by majors, serjeants, and corporals sent from Europe, and picked from the most distinguished regiments. The forming of this militia costs an immense sum, Whether their service will be answerable to the expence is the question, which future events alone can determine. But whatever may be the military spirit of these troops, we may pronounce beforehand, that this establishment, in a political view, is inexcusable; and for the following reasons:

THE project of making soldiers of all the colonists of Cuba, a most unjust and destructive project

ject to all colonies, has been pursued with uncommon ardour. The violence they have been forced to use with the inhabitants, to make them submit to exercises which they were averse from, has produced no other effects than that of increasing their natural love of repose. They detest those mechanical and forced movements, which, not contributing in any respect to their happiness, appear doubly insupportable ; not to mention their seeming frightful or ridiculous to a people, who probably think they have no interest in defending a government by which they are oppressed. This unwillingness to exert themselves, extends even to the labour, which is necessary for cultivating their lands. They have entirely left off clearing, planting, and tilling for a nation, which regards them in no other light than as labourers. The establishment of the militia too put a stop to agriculture. Those productions which were gradually improving have diminished, and will be totally lost, if Spain continues obstinately to pursue a pernicious system, which false principles have induced her to adopt. The rage of keeping up an army ; that madness, which, under pretence of preventing wars, encourages them ; which, by introducing despotism into governments, paves the way for rebellion among the people ; which, continually dragging the inhabitant from his dwelling, and the husbandman from his field, extinguishes in them the love of their country, by driving them from their home ; which oversets nations, and carries them over land and sea : that mercenary profession

of

of war, so different from the truly military spirit, sooner or later will be the ruin of Europe; but much sooner of the colonies, and perhaps, first of all, of those which belong to Spain.

THE most extensive and most fertile part of the American Archipelago is possessed by the Spaniard. These islands, in the hands of an industrious nation, would have proved a source of unbounded wealth. In their present state, they are vast forests, exhibiting only a frightful solitude. Far from contributing to the strength and riches of the kingdom they belong to, they serve only to weaken and to exhaust it by the expences required to maintain them. If Spain had attended properly to the political improvements of other nations, she would have discovered that several of them owed their influence solely to the advantages they have drawn from islands, in every respect inferior to those which have hitherto only served the ignominious purpose of swelling the list of the numberless and useless possessions of the Spanish crown. She would have learned, that there is no other rational foundation of colonies, especially of those which have no mines, but agriculture.

The Spaniards not incapable, as is supposed, of bringing their colonies to great perfection.

IT is not doing justice to the Spaniards to suppose, that they are naturally incapable of labour. If we give the least attention to the excessive fatigues which those of them who are concerned in contraband trade submit to with the utmost patience, we shall find that their toils are infinitely more grievous than any that attend the management of a plantation. If they neglect to enrich themselves

themselves by agriculture, it is the fault of their government. If they were once freed from the tyranny of monopolies; if they were permitted to buy the implements of husbandry at a moderate rate; if the produce of their cultivation was not subject to such exorbitant duties; if they were not oppressed as soon as it is found that they begin to be successful; if industry was not looked upon as a dangerous virtue; if interested individuals were not permitted to exercise an absolute and venal authority over them; they would throw off that habit of indolence and inactivity, by which Spain is almost annihilated. It is astonishing that a kingdom, which, under Charles the Vth, was as it were the head, which directed all the motions of Europe, should now be a feeble and lifeless part of it; and that a state, which makes the principal figure in the map of our continent, should make the most contemptible one in the history of it.

If Spain would recover from her infatuation, let her support her colonists. The treasures of Mexico and Peru are at hand to give riches to the islands; and the generous assistance will be amply paid. All the productions of the new world require a capital in advance: sugar in particular demands a large fund, and the returns are proportionable to it. There is not a single inhabitant at Trinidad, Margareta, Porto-Rico, or St. Domingo, capable of the undertaking; and there are not above thirty at Cuba. All these unemployed, drooping colonists, seem to join in one common petition to the mother-country, for means to shake off the lethargy
in

in which they are plunged. Alas ! might the disinterested historian, who neither seeks nor desires any thing but the general good of mankind, be permitted to furnish them with those sentiments and expressions, which the habit of sloth, the rigour of government, and prejudices of every kind seem to have precluded them from the use of : thus would he in their name address the court of Madrid, and the whole Spanish nation.

“ REFLECT on what we ask from you, and see,
 “ if you will not reap a centuple advantage by the
 “ valuable commodities we shall supply to your
 “ now expiring commerce. Your navy, in-
 “ creased by our labours, will form the only bul-
 “ wark that can preserve to you those possessions,
 “ which are now ready to escape from your hands.
 “ As we become more rich, our consumption will
 “ be the greater ; and then the country, which
 “ you inhabit, and which droops with you, though
 “ nature herself invites it to fertility ; those plains,
 “ which present to your eyes only a desert space,
 “ and are a disgrace to your laws and to your man-
 “ ners, will be converted into fields of plenty,
 “ Your native land will flourish by industry and
 “ agriculture, which have now forsaken you. The
 “ springs of life and activity, which ye will have
 “ conveyed to us through the channel of the sea,
 “ will flow back, and encompass your dwellings
 “ with rivers of abundance. But if ye are insen-
 “ sible to our complaints and misfortunes : if ye do
 “ not govern us for our sakes ; if we are only the
 “ victims of our loyalty ; recall to your minds that
 “ ever

“ ever celebrated æra, in which a nation of unfor-
 “ tunate and discontented subjects shook off the
 “ yoke of your dominion ; and by their labours,
 “ their success, and their opulence, justified their
 “ revolt in the eyes of the whole world. They
 “ have been free near two centuries ; and shall we
 “ still have to lament, that we are governed by
 “ you ? When Holland broke in pieces the rod of
 “ iron, which crushed her ; when she rose from
 “ the depth of the waters to rule over the sea ;
 “ heaven, without doubt, raised her up as a monu-
 “ ment of freedom, to point out to the nations of
 “ the world the path of happiness, and to intimi-
 “ date faithless kings who would exclude them
 “ from it.”

IN effect, this commonwealth, which hath for a
 long time stood upon an equality with the greatest
 monarchies, rose to that height in part by the pro-
 sperity of her colonies. What means she hath pur-
 sued to attain this end, we are now to consider.

BEFORE the discovery of the western coast of
 Africa, the passage to India by the cape of Good
 Hope, and particularly before the discovery of
 America, the European nations scarcely knew, or
 visited each other, except in making barbarous in-
 cursions, the aim of which was plunder, and the
 consequence, destruction. Excepting a small num-
 ber of tyrants, who, by oppressing the weak, found
 means to support a luxury dearly purchased, all
 the inhabitants of the different states were obliged
 to content themselves with the meagre subsistence
 furnished them by lands ill cultivated, and a trade
 which

The Dutch
 establish
 themselves
 at Curas-
 sou, St.
 Eustatia,
 Saba and
 St. Martin,
 The use of
 these small
 islands.

which extended only to the frontiers of each province. Those great events towards the end of the fifteenth century, which form one of the most brilliant epochas of the history of the world, did not produce so sudden a change of manners as might naturally be supposed. Some of the Hanse-towns and some Italian republics, is is true, ventured as far as Cadiz and Lisbon, which were become great marts, to purchase the rare and valuable productions of the East and West Indies ; but the consumption was very small through the inability of the several nations to pay for them. Most of them were languishing in a state of absolute lethargy ; they were totally ignorant of the advantages and resources of the countries that belonged to them.

To rouse them from this state of insensibility, there was wanting a people, who, springing from nothing, should inspire activity and intelligence into every mind, and diffuse plenty through every market : that should offer the produce of all countries at a lower price, and exchange the superfluities of every nation for those commodities which they want ; that should give a quick circulation to produce merchandise and money ; and, by facilitating and increasing consumption, should encourage population, agriculture, and every branch of industry. For all these advantages, Europe is indebted to the Dutch. The blind multitude may be excused in confining themselves to the enjoyment of their prosperity, without knowing the sources of it ; but it is incumbent on the philosopher and the politician to transmit to posterity the fame of the benefactors
of

of mankind; and to trace out, if it be possible, the progress of their beneficence.

BOOK
XII.

WHEN the generous inhabitants of the United Provinces freed themselves from the dominion of the sea and of tyranny, they perceived that they could not fix the foundation of their liberty on a soil which did not afford the necessaries of life. They were convinced, that commerce, which to most nations is no more than an accession, a means only of increasing the quantity and value of the produce of their respective countries, was to them the sole basis of their existence. Without territory and without productions, they determined to give a value to those of other nations; satisfied that their own would be the result of the general prosperity, The event justified their policy.

THEIR first step was to establish, among the nations of Europe, an exchange of the commodities of the north with those of the south. In a short time the sea was covered with the ships of Holland. In her ports were collected all the commercial effects of different countries, and from thence they were dispersed to their respective destinations. Here the value of every thing was regulated, and with a moderation which precluded all competition. The ambition of giving greater stability and extent to her enterprises excited in the republic a spirit of conquest. Her empire extended itself over a part of the Indian continent, and over all the islands of consequence in the sea that encompassed it. By her fortresses or her fleets, she kept in subjection the coasts of Africa: towards which
her

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her ambition, ever directed to useful objects, had turned its attentive and prudent views. But her laws were no where acknowledged except in the countries belonging to America, where cultivation had sowed the seeds of real wealth. The immense chain of her connections embraced the universe; of which, by toil and industry, she became the soul. In a word, she had attained the universal monarchy of commerce.

SUCH was the state of the United Provinces in 1661, when the Portuguese, recovering themselves from that languor and inaction which the tyranny of Spain had thrown them into, found means to repossess themselves of that part of Brasil which the Dutch had taken from them. From this first stroke, that republic would have lost all footing in the new world, had it not been for a few small islands; particularly that of Curassou, which they had taken from the Castilians, who had been in possession of it ever since 1527.

THIS rock, which is not above three leagues off the coast of Venezuela, is about ten leagues long and five broad. It has an excellent harbour, but the entrance is difficult. The bason is extremely large, and convenient in every respect; and is defended by a fort skilfully constructed and always kept in good repair.

THE French, in 1673, having corrupted the commandant, landed there to the number of five or six hundred men: but the treason having been discovered, and the traitor punished, they met with a very different reception from what they expected,

and

and reimbarbed with the disgrace of having exposed only their own weakness, and the iniquity of their measures. BOOK
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LEWIS the XIV. whose pride was hurt by this check, sent out d'Estrees five years after with eighteen ships of war, and twelve buccaneering vessels; to wipe off the stain, which in his eyes tarnished the glory of a reign filled with wonders. The admiral was not far from the place of his destination, when by his rashness and obstinacy he ran his ships aground on Davis's island; and, after collecting the shattered remains of his fleet, returned in very bad condition to Brest, without having attempted any thing.

FROM this period neither Curassou, nor the little islands Aruba and Bonaire, which are dependent on it, have met with any disturbance. No nation has thought of seizing upon a barren spot, where they could find only a few cattle, some manioc, some vegetables proper to feed slaves, and not one article for commerce.

St. Eustatia is of very little more consequence. This island, which is about five leagues in circumference, is properly nothing but a steep mountain rising out of the sea in the form of a cone. It has no port, and is confined to a bay, which does not strictly belong to it. Some Frenchmen, who had been driven from St. Christopher's, took refuge there in 1629, and abandoned the place some time after; because, besides the barrenness of the rock, there was no fresh water, but what they got from rain collected in cisterns. The exact time of their quitting it is not known; but it is certain, that in 1639

the Dutch were in possession of it. They were afterwards driven out by the English, and these by Lewis the XIVth, who caused his right of conquest to be recognized in the negotiation of Breda, and would not listen to the representations of the republic, with which he was then in alliance, and which pressed strongly for the restitution of this island, as having been in possession of it before the war. When the signing of the peace had put an end to these representations, the French monarch, whose pride more readily submitted to the dictates of generosity than of justice, thought it not consistent with his dignity to take advantage of the misfortunes of his friends. He of his own accord restored to the Dutch their island, although he knew that it was a natural fortress, which might be of service in defending that part of St. Christopher's which belonged to him.

St. Eustatia produces some tobacco, and near six hundred thousand weight of sugar. The number of inhabitants, employed in agriculture, consists of one hundred and twenty white, and twelve hundred black people: the traders amount to about five hundred white persons; and to twelve or fifteen hundred, whenever this place has the happiness of being neuter in time of war.

NOTWITHSTANDING its weakness, it has spared some of its number to people a neighbouring island, known by the name of Saba. This is a steep rock, on the summit of which is a little ground, very proper for gardening. Frequent rains which do not lie any time on the soil, give growth to plants of an exquisite flavour, and cabbages of an

extraordinary size. Fifty European families; with about one hundred and fifty slaves, here raise cotton, spin it, make stockings of it, and sell them to other colonies as high as ten crowns * a pair. Throughout America there is no blood so pure as that of Saba; the women there preserve a freshness of complexion, which is not to be found in any other of the Caribbee islands. Happy colony! elevated on the top of a rock, between the sky and sea, it enjoys the benefit of both elements without dreading their storms; it breathes a pure air, lives upon vegetables, cultivates a simple commodity, from which it derives ease without the temptation of riches: is employed in labours less troublesome than useful, and possesses in peace all the blessings of moderation, health, beauty, and liberty. This is the temple of peace, from whence the philosopher may contemplate at leisure the errors and passions of men, who come, like the waves of the sea, to strike and dash themselves on the rich coasts of America, the spoils and possession of which they are perpetually contending for, and wrestling from each other: hence may he view at a distance the nations of Europe bearing thunder in the midst of the ocean, and burning with the flames of ambition and avarice under the heats of the tropics, devouring gold without ever being satisfied, wading through seas of blood to amass those metals, those pearls, those diamonds, which are used to adorn the oppressors of mankind; loading innumerable ships

* 11. 6s. 3d.

ships with those precious casks, which furnish luxury with purple, and from which flow pleasures, effeminacy, cruelty, and debauchery. The tranquil inhabitant of Saba views this mass of follies, and spins in peace the cotton, which constitutes all his finery and wealth.

UNDER the same climate lies the island of St. Martin, which is about fifteen or sixteen leagues round, and contains a considerable number of hills, which are so many rocks covered with heath. The sandy soil of its plains and vallies, which is in itself barren, can only be rendered fruitful by showers, which happen seldom, and are less beneficial in proportion as they are exhaled by the sun, or drain off from the places where they fall. With some care, these casual refreshments might be preserved in reservoirs, and distributed from thence so as to produce plenty. As to the rest, this island, which has no river, is furnished with springs and cisterns, which supply the inhabitants with very good water. The air is very wholesome, the coast abounds with fish, the sea is seldom tempestuous, and there is safe anchorage all round the island.

THE Dutch and French, who met there in 1638, lived in peace, but separate from each other, when the Spaniards, who were at war with both nations, chose to attack them in their new settlement; beat them, made them prisoners, and took possession of the place themselves: but the conqueror soon grew weary of an establishment which brought no profit, and cost 400,000 livres * a year. He therefore

* About 17,500*l.* sterling.

fore quitted it in 1648, after having destroyed every thing he could not carry away with him.

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THESE devastations did not hinder the former possessors from returning to the island as soon as they knew that it was evacuated. They mutually agreed never to disturb each other's peace, and have preserved inviolably this engagement, which was equally for the advantage of both. The disputes between their respective nations did not in the least alter these dispositions ; and an uninterrupted peace reigned among them till the year 1757, when the French were driven out by the commander of an English privateer, named Cook ; but they returned again as soon as hostilities ceased.

OF about fifty thousand acres of land, which this island contains, thirty-five thousand belong to the French. This great extent would employ ten thousand persons ; and it is not improbable, that the progress of cultivation may one day increase their numbers to that amount, if the rigour of our governments in Europe should give birth to liberty in America. In 1753 there were not more than one hundred and two white inhabitants, and one hundred and eighty-five slaves. Their cattle consisted of thirty-seven horses, ninety-one bulls and cows, 315 sheep, and 458 goats. For their subsistence they cultivated 17,500 banana-trees, eighty-four plots of yams or potatoes, and 82,000 trenches of manioc. The produce of 425,600 cotton trees was all they had to trade with.

THE line of separation, drawn from east to west, which confines the Dutch within a smaller compass,

has made them ample amends, by giving them possession of the only port in the island, and of a large salt-pit, which brings them in annually two hundred thousand crowns *. They have, besides these, their sugar works, which employ three thousand slaves: their labour, however, never turns to account but in wet seasons.

BOTH colonies have of late taken up the cultivation of coffee with good success. This article may, perhaps, in time set them above their difficulties; a prospect, which at present is more distant to the French than to the Dutch.

THE settlements of the latter in the great Archipelago of America, do not thus far upon the first view present any thing curious or interesting. Their produce, which is scarcely sufficient to freight four or five moderate vessels, seems not worth any degree of attention; and they would accordingly have been consigned to oblivion, if some of them, which are of no consequence in cultivation, were not very considerable in commerce. This is to be understood of St. Eustatia and Curassou,

THE desire of forming a contraband intercourse with the Spanish main, was the cause of the conquest of Curassou. In a short time a great number of Dutch ships arrived there: they were of force, and well equipped: their crews consisted of choice men, whose courage was seconded by their interest. Each of them had a share in the cargo, which he was resolved to defend at the risque of his life against the attacks of the guarda-costas.

AFTER

AFTER a time, the method of carrying on this trade was changed. Curassou itself became an immense magazine, to which the Spaniards resorted in their boats to exchange their gold, silver, vanilla, cocoa, cochineal, bark, skins, and mules, for negroes, linen, silks, India stuffs, spices, laces, ribbands, quicksilver, steel, and iron ware. These voyages, though they were continual, did not prevent a multitude of Dutch sloops from passing from their island to the creeks on the continent. The wants, the supplies, the labours, and the voyages of the two nations were reciprocal, and made their coasts a most active scene of trade, though they were rivals in commerce, and equally covetous of gain. The modern substitution of register-ships, in the place of galleons, has made this communication less frequent; but it will be revived, and even increased, whenever by the intervention of war the immediate communication with the Spanish main shall be cut off.

THE disputes between the courts of London and Versailles open a new sphere of action for Curassou. At these times it furnishes provisions to all the southern coast of St. Domingo, and takes off all its produce. This trade will increase in proportion to the progress that part of the French colony shall make, and of which it has considerable opportunities. Even the French privateers from the Windward islands repair in great numbers to Curassou in the times of hostilities, notwithstanding the distance. The reason is, that they find there all kinds of necessary stores for their

vessels; and frequently Spanish, but always European goods, which are universally used. English privateers seldom cruize in these parts.

EVERY commodity, without exception, that is landed at Curaçou, pays one per cent, port-duty. Dutch goods are never taxed higher: but those that are shipped from other European ports, pay nine per cent. more. Foreign coffee is subject to the same tax, in order to promote the sale of that of Surinam. Every other production of America is subject only to a payment of three per cent. but with an express stipulation, that they are to be conveyed directly to some port of the republic.

St. Eustatia was formerly subject to the same impositions as Curaçou; but they were taken off at the beginning of the late war. It derived this benefit from its neighbourhood to the Danish island of St. Thomas, which being a free port, engrossed a great part of its trade. Under the present regulation, its contraband trade in time of peace is chiefly confined to the barter of English cod for the molasses and rums of the French islands.

A state of hostility between the courts of London and Versailles opens a very large field to St. Eustatia; which is enriched by their divisions. In the last war it became the staple of almost all the merchandise of the French colonies, and the general magazine of supply for them. But this great operation was not conducted singly by the Dutch: both English and French united in the harbour of this island, to form, under shelter of its neutrality, commercial engagements. A Dutch passport, which

which cost 252 livres *, and was granted without inquiring of what nation the person was who applied for it, kept their connections from public view. This great liberty gave rise to numberless transactions between persons very singularly situated with regard to each other. Thus commerce found the art of pacifying or eluding the vigilance of discord.

BUT the Dutch, who are equally masters of the art of converting either the good or bad fortune of others to their own profit, are not confined to the temporary advantages of a precarious trade in the new world. They are in possession of a large territory, which they cultivate, on the continent. It is separated from the French Guiana by the river Marazoni, and by that of Poumaran from Spanish Guiana; and known by the name of Surinam, the most ancient and most important settlement in the colony.

THE foundation of it was laid in 1640, by the French, whose activity carried them at that time into a variety of climates, and whose fickleness suffered them not to settle in any. They abandoned Surinam a few years after they arrived there, and were succeeded by the English; whose diligence began to be attended with some success, when they were attacked in 1667 by the Dutch, who, finding them dispersed over a vast tract of land, had little difficulty in subduing them. Some years after they were, to the number of twelve hundred, transported to Jamaica, and the colony was formally ceded to the republic.

Dutch settlement at Surinam, Berbice, and Essequibé.

THEIR

* About 11*l.* sterling.

THEIR subjects, whose sole occupation was commerce, had not the least taste for agriculture. Surinam was for some time a monument of the prejudices of its new masters. At length, the company, which governed the country, cut down woods, divided part of the land among the inhabitants, and furnished them with slaves. All persons, who were desirous of occupying these lands, obtained grants of them upon an engagement to pay, by installments out of their produce, the price at which each lot was valued : and they had the further privilege of disposing of them to any purchaser, who would agree to pay whatever part of the original debt remained due.

THE success of these first settlements gave rise to a great number of others. By degrees they extended to twenty leagues distance from the mouth of the Surinam, and of the Commewine, which runs into it ; and would have advanced much further, if they had not been checked by the fugitive negroes, who, taking refuge in inaccessible forests, where they have recovered their liberty, never cease to infest the back parts of the colony.

THE difficulties which attended the clearing of these lands, required that uncommon resolution which is ready to attempt, and that perseverance which is capable of surmounting every thing. The greatest part of the lands which were to be made fit for cultivation, were covered with water every tide to the depth of four or five feet. By making great numbers of ditches and sluices, they succeeded in draining them ; and thus the glory of setting

setting bounds to the ocean was acquired by the Dutch in the new world, as it had been before in the old. They contrived even to give to their plantations that nearness which is every where a characteristic of them, and such conveniences as are not to be found in the most flourishing either of the English or French settlements.

B O O K
XII.

ONE of the principal circumstances, to which they owe their success, has been the extreme ease with which the settlers procured money to carry on their works. They raised as much as they could make use of at the rate of six *per cent.* but under an express condition, that their plantations should be mortgaged to their creditors, and that they should be obliged to deliver to them their whole produce at the price current in the colony, till such time as the debt should be entirely paid off.

With the assistance of these loans, they formed upon the banks of the Surinam, or at a little distance from it, 425 plantations, upon which, in 1762, were 84,500 blacks, and 4000 white men as overseers. Among the latter, are included French refugees, Moravians, and a very considerable number of Jews. There is, perhaps, no country upon earth where this unhappy nation is so well treated. They not only permit them to enjoy the exercise of their religion, the propriety of lands, and the determination of disputes which arise among themselves; they suffer them likewise to participate of the common rights of citizens, to have a share in the general administration of affairs, and to vote in the elections of public magistrates.

Such

Such is the influence of the spirit of trade, that it forces all national and religious prejudices to submit to that general interest, which should be the bond of union among mankind. What are those idle nominal distinctions of Jews, Lutherans, French, or Dutch? Miserable inhabitants of a spot, which ye cultivate with so much toil and sorrow; are ye not all men? Why then do ye drive each other from a world, where ye live but for an instant? And what a life too is it, that ye have the folly and cruelty to dispute with each other the enjoyment of? Is it not sufficient, that the elements, the heavens, and even the earth, fight against you, but ye must add to those scourges, with which nature has surrounded you, the abuse of that little strength she has left you to resist them?

PARAMABIRO, the principal place of the colony of Surinam, is a small town pleasantly situated. The houses are pretty, and convenient; though they are only built of wood upon a foundation of European bricks. Its port, which is five leagues distant from the sea, has every requisite that can be desired. It is the rendezvous of all the ships dispatched from the mother-country to receive the produce of the colony.

THE success of this establishment suggested, in 1732, the idea of forming another upon the river Berbice, which falls into the sea nineteen leagues west of the Surinam. The shores at its mouth were so marshy, that they found it necessary to go fifteen leagues up the stream in order to form plantations on its banks. A nation, that had made even the

sea habitable, it can scarcely be supposed, would yield to such an obstacle. A new company had the glory of raising new productions in a soil taken from the bed of the sea, and the oar gave place to the plough-share.

THE same prodigy has since been attempted by another association, and with the same success, on the Demerary and Essequibé, which fall into the same bay at twenty leagues distance from Berbice, and upon the Poumaran, at fifteen leagues from the Essequibé, and twenty-five from the principal mouth of the Orinoko. The two last colonies will probably some time or other equal that of Surinam; but at present they do not reckon that there are more than twelve hundred free persons there, at the head of twenty-eight, or thirty thousand slaves.

THESE three settlements produce exactly the same articles; cotton, cocoa, and sugar. Though the last of these is much the most considerable, the quantity does not answer either to the number of hands, or the pains they take about it. This defect arises, no doubt, from the nature of the soil, which is too marshy, and by its superabundant humidity drowns or washes away the vegetable salts and juices of the cane. The little profit they made of it induced the planters to turn their thoughts to some other object; and, about the beginning of this century, they took up the cultivation of the coffee-tree.

Produce of
the three
settle-
ments.

THIS tree, originally the produce of Arabia, where nature, scantily supplying the necessaries of life,

life, scatters its luxuries with a lavish hand, was long the favourite plant of that happy country. The unsuccessful attempts made by the Europeans in the cultivation of it, induced them to believe that the inhabitants of that country steeped the fruit in boiling water, or dried it in the oven before they sold it, in order to secure to themselves a trade from which they derived all their wealth. They continued in this error, till they had conveyed the tree itself to Batavia, and afterwards to Surinam; when they were convinced by experience, that the seed of the coffee tree, as well as of many other plants, will never come to any thing, unless it is put fresh into the ground.

THE fruit of this plant resembles a cherry. It grows in clusters, and is ranged along the branches under the axillæ of the leaves, of the same green as those of the laurel, but something longer. When it comes to be of a deep red, it is gathered and carried to the mill.

THE mill is composed of two wooden rollers, furnished with two plates of iron, eighteen inches long, and ten or twelve in diameter: these are moveable, and are made to approach a third, which is fixt, and which they call the chops. Above the rollers is a hopper, in which they put the coffee, from whence it falls between the rollers and the chops, where it is stript of its first skin, and divided into two parts, as may be seen by the form of it after it has undergone this operation, being flat on one side, and round on the other. From this machine it falls into a brass sieve, where
the

the skin drops between the wires, while the fruit slides over them into baskets placed ready to receive it: it is then thrown into a vessel full of water, where it soaks for one night, and is afterwards thoroughly washed. When the whole is finished, and well dried, it is put into another machine, which is called the peeling-mill. This is a wooden grinder, which is turned vertically upon its trendle by a mule or a horse. In passing over the dried coffee it takes off the parchment, which is nothing but a thin skin that detaches itself from the berry, in proportion as it grows dry. The parchment being removed, it is taken out of this mill to be winnowed in another, which is called the winnowing-mill. This machine is provided with four pieces of tin fixed upon an axle, which is turned by a slave with considerable force; and the wind that is made by the motion of these plates, clears the coffee of all the pellicles that are mixed with it. It is afterwards put upon a table, where the broken berries, and any filth that may happen to remain, are separated by negroes. After these operations the coffee is fit for sale.

THE tree, which produces it, flourishes only in those climates where the winters are extremely mild. The curious raise them only in hot-houses, where they water them frequently, and this merely for the pleasure of seeing them.

THE coffee-tree delights particularly in hills and mountains, where its root is almost always dry, and its head frequently watered with gentle showers. It prefers a western aspect, and ploughed ground

ground without any appearance of grass. The plants should be placed at eight feet distance from each other, and in holes twelve or fifteen inches deep. If left to themselves they would rise to the height of twenty feet; but they are stinted to five, for the sake of gathering their fruit with greater ease. Thus dwarfed they extend their branches, so that they cover the whole spot round about them.

THE coffee-tree blossoms in the months of December, January, and February, according to the temperature of the air or the season for rain, and bears in October or November. It begins to yield fruit the third year, but is not in full bearing till the fifth. With the same infirmities that most other trees are subject to, it is likewise in danger of being destroyed either by a worm, that pierces its root, or by the darting rays of the sun, which are as fatal to it as to the human species. The length of its life depends upon the quality of the soil it is planted in. The hills where it is chiefly found have a gravelly or chalky bottom. In one of these it languishes for some time, and then dies; in the other, its roots, which seldom fail of striking between the stones, obtain nourishment, invigorate the trunk, and keep the tree alive and fruitful for thirty years.

THIS is nearly the period for plants of the coffee-tree. The proprietor at the end of this term not only finds himself without trees, but has his land so reduced, that it is not fit for any kind of culture. One may fairly say, he has sunk his capital for an income of a very short continuance.

If his situation happens to be in an island entirely inclosed and occupied, his loss is not to be repaired; but upon an open and widely extensive continent, he may make himself amends for a spot totally exhausted by a tract of unappropriated and unbroken virgin land, which it is at his own option to clear. This advantage has contributed amazingly to multiply the coffee plantations in that part of Guiana that belongs to the Dutch.

THE single colony of Surinam furnished in 1768 one hundred thousand weight of cotton, two hundred thousand of cocoa, fourteen millions of coffee, and twenty-eight millions six hundred thousand of raw sugar. Seventy ships were freighted with these commodities to bring them to the mother country. It is not possible for us to determine with the same precision the produce of the other colonies; but we shall not be very wide of the truth in setting it at one fourth part. It may and will increase considerably. Every species of cultivation, they have yet undertaken, will be extended and improved. They will, perhaps, attempt new ones; at least, they will resume that of indigo, which a few unsuccessful experiments induced them to abandon without sufficient reason.

It is true, that the coast, which is seventy-six leagues in extent, does not afford a single spot for plantation. The land throughout is low and always under water. But the great rivers, upon which settlements have begun to be made, and the least of which is navigable for more than thirty leagues, give a strong invitation to enterprising men to come and enrich themselves on their banks:

The country that lies between these, is fruitful, and watered by smaller rivers, which are, however, large enough to carry sloops. The only obstacle to great success is the climate. The year is divided between continual rains and excessive heats. The crops, which cost the planters vast pains to raise, are not to be preserved, without the utmost difficulty, from swarms of disgusting reptiles: and they themselves are exposed successively to the languors of the dropsy, and to fevers of every kind.

THIS is undoubtedly the reason which has induced the principal proprietors of Dutch Guiana to reside in Europe. There are scarcely to be found in the colony any inhabitants, but the factors of these wealthy men, and such proprietors, whose fortunes are too moderate to admit of their intrusting the care of their plantations to other hands. For this reason, their consumption cannot be large: accordingly the vessels, which are sent from the mother country to bring home their produce, carry out nothing but absolute necessities; at least, if there are ever any articles of luxury, it is but seldom. Even this scanty supply the Dutch traders are forced to share with the English of North-America.

THOSE foreigners were at first admitted only because the colony was under a necessity of purchasing horses of them. The difficulty of breeding, and, perhaps, other causes, have established this permission. The bringing horses is so indispensable a passport for the men, that a ship which does

not carry a number proportioned to its size is not admitted into their harbours. But if the horses happen to die in the passage, it is sufficient that their heads are produced; which entitles the owners to expose to sale other commodities, with which they may have stocked themselves in lieu of their horses. There is a law forbidding payments to be made otherwise than by barter of molasses and rum; but this law is little attended to. The English, who have usurped the right of importing thither whatever they please, take care to export the most valuable commodities of the colony, and even exact payments in money or bills of exchange on Europe. Such is the law of force, which republics apply, not only to other nations, but to each other. The English treat the Dutch pretty much in the same manner as the Athenians did the people of Melos. *It has ever been the case*, said they to the inhabitants of that island, *that the weakest submits to the strongest: this law is not of our making; it is as old as the world, and will subsist as long as the world endures.* This argument, which is so well calculated to suit the purposes of injustice, brought Athens in its turn under the dominion of Sparta, and at length destroyed it by the hands of the Romans.

VARIOUS are the opinions with respect to the dangers which Dutch Guiana may be exposed to. It shall be our business to obtain some fixed idea on this important point. In the first instance, an invasion by any of the European powers, would be easily effected. Their largest ships could enter the river Poumaran, the mouth of which has seven or

Dangers,
to which
the Dutch
colonies
are exposed.

eight fathom depth of water, which goes, continually increasing, to forty fathom, at the distance of four or five leagues. The little fort of New Zeland, which protects the banks, could not stand their artillery for two hours. The entrance of the Demerary, which has from eighteen to twenty and twenty-four fathom of water, and has not less than fifteen or sixteen through the space of four leagues, and is totally defenceless, would be still more easy. The outlet of the Essequibé, which is three leagues in breadth, is filled with small islands and shallows; but here, as well as all along the course of the river, are found channels deep enough to bring the largest ships up to an island ten leagues distant from the sea, and defended only by a miserable redoubt. And though the river Berbice, which is one league broad, can scarcely admit the smallest vessels, they would carry sufficient force to reduce Fort Nassau, and the scattered settlements on both its banks. All the western part of Dutch Guiana is scarcely in a condition to resist the attack of an enterprising cruizer; but would infallibly be obliged to capitulate on the sight of the most contemptible squadron.

THE eastern part, which, by its wealth, is exposed to greater danger, is better defended. The entrance of the Surinam river is not very practicable, on account of its sand-bank. Ships, however, that do not draw more than twenty feet water, can come in at flood. At two leagues from its outlet, the Commewine joins the Surinam. This point of union the Dutch have principally forti-

fortified. They have erected a battery on the Surinam, another on the right bank of the Commewine, and on the left bank, a citadel called Amsterdam. These works form a triangle; and their fires, which cross each other, are contrived to have the double effect of preventing ships from proceeding further up one river, and from entering into the other. The fortress is situated in the middle of a small morass, and is inaccessible, except by a narrow causeway entirely commanded by the artillery. It requires no more than eight or nine hundred men to garrison it completely. It is flanked with four bastions, and surrounded with a mud rampart, a wide ditch full of water, and a good covered way: for the rest, it is unprovided with powder magazines, has no vaults, nor any kind of casemate. Three leagues higher up on the Surinam is a close battery, intended to cover the harbour and town of Parambiro. It is called, Fort Zeland. A battery of the same kind, which they call Sommeswelt-fort, covers the Commewine at nearly the same distance. The forces of the colony consist of its militia and twelve hundred regulars; one half of whose pay is supplied by the inhabitants, and the other by the company.

THIS number of men would be more than sufficient, if they had nothing to guard against but the efforts of the natives. The few savages, who endeavoured to keep possession of places that suited the Dutch, have been exterminated. The rest kept retreating further into the inland parts, in proportion as they found the Europeans encroach-



ing upon them; and live quietly in those woods, which, by serving them as an asylum, are become as dear to them as the country from which they have been driven.

BUT the colony has not the same degree of security with respect to the negroes. When these miserable creatures, who are brought from Africa, are exposed to sale, they are placed one after another upon a table, and examined with the most minute attention by a surgeon employed by the government. According to his report, the prices of them are settled, and the money is usually paid at the end of three weeks. The purchaser, however, has four and twenty hours allowed him to judge from his own observation, of the goodness of his bargain. If within that time he is dissatisfied with the choice he has made, he has a right to return what he has taken without any ceremony or indemnification; provided he has not set his seal upon them. This seal is a silver plate, on which are engraved the initials of his christian and surname: after heating it, they apply it to the arm or breast of the slave, and the marks thus burned in can never be effaced. The use of this barbarous practice is to enable them to distinguish those whose features are not sufficiently characterised for European eyes.

NOTHING is more uncommon in the Dutch settlements than to see a slave made free. He cannot obtain his liberty but by becoming a christian; and before they are authorised to administer baptism to him, they must purchase letters of freedom, which
cost

cost four hundred livres *. Security must also be given for his maintenance during life, lest he should become a burthen to the company, or should be induced to increase the number of the enemies of the colony, which is already too great. When we add to these expences the loss of the original purchase-money, we may safely venture to conclude, that the franchisement of a slave cannot be common among a people with whom avarice is the ruling, if not the only passion.

THE planters here are so far from giving way to these acts of humanity, that they have carried oppression to infinitely greater lengths, than it has been extended to in the islands. The opportunities of desertion on a continent of immense extent is, probably, the cause of this extraordinary barbarity towards the blacks. Upon the slightest suspicion a slave is put to death by his master in the presence of all his companions; but this is done without the knowledge of the white people, who might give evidence against them for so flagrant a breach of the rights of civil authority. The blacks, not being admitted to give testimony, are of no sort of consequence. The mother-country winks at this cruelty, and, by its shameful connivance, risks the loss of an useful settlement. They have frequently had the strongest reason to be apprehensive of a revolution; but the danger was never so great nor so imminent as in 1763.

IN the month of February, 1763, an insurrection broke out, which by its example and consequences

* Between 171. and 181. sterling.

might have produced the most fatal effects throughout the American settlements. Seventy-three blacks assembled in one house at Berbice, suddenly murdered their master, and set about the cry of liberty. At this sound, courage and hope revived and animated the whole body of slaves. They joined to the number of nine thousand, and in the first transports of their rage fell upon all the white people in their way; these, with the chief of the colony, were obliged to take refuge on board a brigantine at the lower port of the river. In the mean time five hundred men arrived from Surinam to their assistance. They made an attempt to land, and intrenched themselves in an advantageous post, till the arrival of some troops from Europe.

HAPPILY for the republic, the English at Barbadoes, who are in possession of most of the plantations formed on the Poumaran, Demerary, and Essequibé, sent in time a sufficient force to keep the slaves on these three rivers in order; and, by a still more fortunate occurrence, the people at Surinam at this very time concluded a treaty they had on foot with the negroes, who had taken refuge in the neighbouring woods. Ignorant as they probably were of a commotion which might have been so favourable to them, they consented not to receive among them any fugitives of their own nation. This stipulation deprived the rebels of their principal resource; and by such a combination of unexpected events, they were reduced again to a state of servitude. The greatest part of them being without arms, they eagerly embraced the offer of a capitulation

capitulation with their masters, They have, however, given proofs of that inextinguishable principle prevailing in their souls, which never fails to resist oppression. The tranquillity of Dutch Guiana, like that of all other countries where rebellions have once broke out, is more apparent than real. The seeds of treason are ripening in secret within the forests of Auka and Sarmaca.

IN these deserts, which are peopled with all the slaves who have fled from the yoke of the covetous Hollander, a species of republic has grown up, composed of fifteen or sixteen thousand inhabitants, divided into several villages, each of which chooses a chief for itself. These wandering clans fall unexpectedly sometimes upon one side of the colony, sometimes upon another, in order to carry off supplies for their own subsistence, and to lay waste the wealth of their former tyrants. It is in vain that the troops are kept continually upon the watch, to check or to surprize so dangerous an enemy. By means of private information, they contrive to escape every snare, and direct their incursions towards those parts which happen to be left defenceless. Conventions and treaties are no security against their attacks.

It depends, however, upon the wisdom and moderation of these very republicans, who have rendered the load of servitude so oppressive to the negroes, to prevent a general revolution, of which they would be the first victims. They have already been guilty of great oversights. They have not given to their American settlements, that attention they deserved, although they have met with strokes

Reasons
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so severe, and so closely following upon each other, as ought to have opened their eyes. If they had not been blinded by the rapidity of their success, they would have discovered the beginning of their ruin in the loss of Brazil. Deprived of that vast acquisition, which in their hands might have become the first colony of the universe, and might have atoned for the weakness or insufficiency of their territory in Europe, they saw themselves reduced to the condition they were in before they had made this conquest, of being factors for other nations; and thus was created, in their mass of real wealth, a void which hath never since been filled up.

THE consequences of the act of navigation, passed in England, were not less fatal to the Dutch. From this time that island, ceasing to be a tributary to the trade of the republic, became her rival, and in a short time acquired a decisive superiority over her in Africa, Asia, and America.

HAD other nations adopted the policy of Britain, Holland must have sunk under the stroke. Happily for her, their kings knew not, or cared not, for the prosperity of their people. Every government, however, in proportion as it has become more enlightened, has assumed to itself its own branches of commerce. Each step that has been taken for this purpose, has been an additional check upon the Dutch; and we may presume, from the present state of things, that sooner or later every people will establish a navigation for themselves, suited to the nature of their country, and to the extent of their abilities. To this period the
course

course of events in all nations seems to tend ; and, whensoever it shall arrive, the Dutch, who are indebted for their success as much to the indolence and ignorance of their neighbours, as to their own œconomy and experience, will find themselves reduced to their original state of poverty.

It is not certainly in the power of human prudence to prevent this revolution ; but there was no necessity to anticipate it, as the republic has done, by choosing to interfere as a principal in the troubles which so frequently have agitated Europe. The interested policy of our times would have afforded a sufficient excuse for the wars she has commenced or sustained for the sake of her trade. But upon what principle can she justify those in which her exorbitant ambition, or ill-founded apprehensions, have engaged her ? She has been obliged to support herself by immense loans : if we sum up together all the debts separately contracted by the states-general, the provinces, and the towns, which are all equally public debts, we shall find they amount to two thousand millions of livres * ; the interest of which, though reduced to two and a half per cent. has amazingly increased the load of taxes.

I shall leave it to others to examine whether these taxes have been laid on with judgment, and collected with due œconomy. It is sufficient here to remark, that they have had the effect of increasing so considerably the prices of necessaries, and consequently that of labour, that the industrious

part

* Between 80 and 90 millions sterling.

part of the nation have suffered severely from them. The manufactures of wool, silk, gold, silver, and a variety of others, have sunk, after having struggled for a long time under the growing weight of taxes and scarcity. When the spring equinox brings on at the same time high tides and the melting of the snow, a country is laid under water by the overflowing of the rivers. No sooner does the increase of taxes raise the price of provisions, than the workman, who pays more for his daily consumption, without receiving any addition to his wages, forsakes the manufacture and workshop. Holland has not preserved any of its internal resources of trade, but such as were not exposed to any foreign competition.

THE husbandry of the republic, if we may be allowed to call it by that name, that is to say, the herring-fishery, has scarcely suffered less. This fishery, which for a long time was entitled the gold mine of the state, on account of the number of persons who derived their subsistence, and even grew rich from it, is not only reduced to one-half, but the profits of it, as well as those of the whale fishery, are dwindled by degrees to nothing. Nor is it by advances of specie, that those who support these two fisheries, embark in the undertaking. The partnerships consist of merchants, who furnish the bottoms, the rigging, the utensils, and the stores. Their profit consists almost entirely in the vent of these several merchandises: they are paid for them out of the produce of the fishery, which seldom yields more than is sufficient to defray its
expences.

expences. The impossibility there is in Holland of employing their numerous capitals to better advantage, has been the only cause of preserving the remains of this ancient source of the public prosperity.

THE excessive taxes, which have ruined the manufactures of the republic, and reduced the profits of their fisheries so low, has greatly confined their navigation. The Dutch have the materials for building at the first hand. They seldom cross the sea without a cargo. They live with the strictest sobriety. The lightness of their ships in working is a great saving in the numbers of their crews; and these crews are easily formed, and always kept in the greatest perfection, and at a small expence, from the multitude of sailors swarming in a country which consists of nothing else but sea and shore. Notwithstanding all these advantages, which are further increased by the low rate of money, they have been forced to share the freight trade of Europe with Sweden, Denmark, and especially the Hamburgers, with whom the necessary requisites for navigation are not incumbered with the same impositions.

WITH the freights have diminished the commissions which used to be sent to the United Provinces. When Holland was become a great staple, merchandise was sent thither from all parts, as to the market where the sale of it was most ready, sure, and advantageous. Foreign merchants were the more ready oftentimes to send them thither, as they obtained, at an easy rate, credit

to the amount of two-thirds, or even three-fourths, of the value of their goods. This management insured to the Dutch the double advantage of employing their capitals without risque, and obtaining a commission besides. The profits of commerce were at that time so considerable, that they could easily bear these charges: they are now so greatly lessened, since experience has multiplied the number of adventurers, that the seller is obliged to conduct his commodity himself to the consumer, without the intervention of any agent. But if upon certain occasions an agent must be employed, they will prefer, *ceteris paribus*, Hamburgh, where commodities pay a duty only of one per cent. for import and export, to Holland where they pay five.

THE republic hath lost likewise the trade of insurance, which she had in a manner monopolized formerly. It was in her ports that all the nations of Europe used to insure their freights, to the great profit of the insurers, who, by dividing and multiplying their risques, seldom failed of enriching themselves. In proportion as the spirit of inquiry introduced itself into all our ideas, whether of philosophy or œconomy, the utility of these speculations became universally known. The practice became familiar and general; and what other nations have gained by it was of course lost to Holland.

FROM these observations it is evident, that all the branches of commerce the republic was in possession of, have been very greatly diminished.

Perhaps the greater part of them would have been annihilated, if the largeness of her stock, and her extraordinary œconomy, had not enabled her to be satisfied with a profit of no more than three per cent. which we look upon to be the value of the product upon all her trade. The deficiency has been made up to them by vesting their money in the English, French, Austrian, Saxon, Danish, and even Russian funds, the amount of which, upon the whole, is about sixteen hundred millions of livres *.

FORMERLY the state made this branch of commerce unlawful, which is now become the most considerable of any. Had this law been observed, the sums they have lent to foreigners would have lain unemployed at home; their capitals for the use of trade being already so large, that the least addition to them, so far from giving an advantage, would become detrimental, by making the amount too great for use. The superfluity of money would immediately have brought the United Provinces to that period, in which excess of wealth begets poverty. Millions of opulent persons, in the midst of their treasures, would not have had a sufficiency to support themselves.

THE contrary practice has been the principal resource of the republic. The money she has lent to neighbouring nations, has procured her an annual balance in her favour, by the revenue accruing from it. The credit is always the same, and produces always the same interest.

* About 70 millions sterling.

WE shall not presume to determine how long the Dutch will continue to enjoy so comfortable a situation. Experience authorises us only to declare, that all governments, which have unfortunately for the people adopted the detestable system of borrowing, will, sooner or later, be forced to give it up; and the abuse they have made of it will most probably oblige them to defraud their creditors. Whenever the republic shall be reduced to this state, her great resource will be in agriculture.

THIS, though it is capable of improvement in the country of Breda, Bois-le-Duc, Zutphen, and Gueldres, can never become very considerable. The territory belonging to the United Provinces is so small, that it will almost justify the opinion of a sultan, who, seeing with what obstinacy the Dutch and Spaniards disputed with each other the possession of it, declared, if it belonged to him, he would order his pioneers to throw it into the sea. The soil is good for nothing but fish, which, before the Dutch, were the only inhabitants of it. It has been said with as much truth as energy, that the four elements were but in embryo there. The produce of the lands will never be sufficient to maintain one fourth part of the two millions that inhabit it at this time. It cannot, therefore, be by her European possessions, that the republic can expect to be preserved: she may depend with more reason upon those in America.

THE countries she holds in that part of the world are, all of them, under the influence of monopolies.

polies. Her islands, as well as her factories in Africa, depend upon the West India company, the credit of which, since the loss of Brazil, has sunk so prodigiously, that their stock sells at near sixty *per cent.* under par.

SURINAM, which was taken by some private ships fitted out in Zeland, was ceded by the states of that province to the same company, who, having still their imagination filled with the idea of their ancient grandeur, undertook without hesitation the management of that territory. Upon serious reflection they found, that the expence which was necessary to put it in a state to yield them any advantage, was far too great for their exhausted finances. They gave up a third of their property to the city of Amsterdam; and another third to an opulent individual of the name of Daarssens. The two other colonies on the continent are likewise under the controul of trading companies, to which they owe their foundation.

Not one of these societies is in possession of a single ship, nor carries on any sort of trade. The navigation to the American settlements is equally open to every member of the community; under this whimsical and oppressive condition, however, that every ship, bound for Surinam and Berbice, shall sail from Amsterdam; and those for Essequébé from Zeland; and that they shall return to the same ports from which they sailed. The business of the companies is confined to the government, and the defence of the territories submitted to their jurisdiction; and, to enable them to support these ex-

pences, the republic authorises them to impose taxes of different kinds.

ALL commodities imported into the colonies, or exported from them, pay large duties. Slaves, on their arrival, are subject to much larger. There is a poll-tax upon blacks and whites from the age of three years. None but foreigners are exempted from this shameful tribute; and this exemption is not taken off but by a residence of more than ten years. When an estate is transferred, both the seller and the purchaser are subject to a considerable fine. Every manufacturer, be his industry ever so great, is obliged to give in an account of his gains upon oath; and the impost is regulated agreeable to the amount of his profits. After the public expences are defrayed, the remainder of the revenue, which the weakness or corruption of the sovereign power has suffered to become too exorbitant, is divided among the members of the different companies.

EVERY wise government has discovered the ill effect of leaving their American possessions in the hands of particular societies, whose private interests do not always coincide with that of the public. They have considered their subjects in the new world as having an equal right with those of the old, to be governed, not by partial, but by general laws. They have been of opinion, that their colonies would make a more rapid progress under the immediate protection of the state, than under that of a middle-agent. The event has demonstrated more or less in all cases the justness of these reflections.

reflections. Holland is the only power which has not adopted so simple and rational a plan; though every circumstance concurred to make it more necessary to her than to other states.

HER settlements are without any defence against enemies, which either ambition or revenge may raise up against her; and are in continual danger of insurrections from the cruelty with which the slaves are treated. Their productions, all of which ought to be carried home to the mother-country, are every day smuggled into foreign colonies in North-America. The disinclination, which a people merely commercial naturally have to the improvement of land, is strengthened in the colonies by the abuses inseparable from the form of government established there. The means of creating a new order of things in them are not within the reach of the authority, protection, or activity, of a private society. Revolutions of such magnitude cannot be brought about but by the immediate superintendence of the state.

IF the republic adopts the resolution which her most important interests require, she will cease to depend solely for her existence upon a precarious industry, some branches of which she is every day losing, and which, sooner or later, she will lose entirely. Her colonies, which comprehend every advantage that a mercantile nation, which is also engaged in agriculture, can desire, will furnish productions, the whole profits and property of which will center in her. By her territorial acquisitions she will be enabled in every market to rival those



nations, whose commodities she formerly served only to convey. In a word, Holland will cease to be a warehouse, and become a state. She will find in America that consilience which Europe has denied her. It remains to see, if Denmark, the only northern power that has extended its trade and sovereignty into the new world, has any reasonable foundation to conceive hopes of aggrandizing itself by them.

Danish settlement at St. Thomas, St. John, and Santa-Cruz.

DENMARK and Norway, which are at present united under the same government, formed in the eighth century two different states. While the former signalized itself by the conquest of England, and other bold enterprises, the latter peopled the Orcades, Fero, and Iceland. Urged by that restless spirit, which had always actuated their ancestors the Scandinavians, this active nation, so early as the ninth century, formed an establishment in Greenland, which country there is good reason to suppose is attached to the American continent. It is even thought, notwithstanding the darkness which prevails over all the historical records of the north, that there are sufficient traces to induce a belief, that their navigators in the eleventh century were hardy enough to penetrate as far as the coasts of Labrador and Newfoundland, and that they left some small colonies on them. Hence it is probable that the Norwegians have a right to dispute with Columbus the glory of having discovered the new world; at least, if those may be said to have made the discovery, who were there without knowing it.

THE wars which Norway had to sustain, till the time it became united to Denmark ; the difficulties which the government opposed to its navigation ; the state of oblivion and inaction into which this enterprising nation fell ; not only lost it its colonies in Greenland, but also whatever settlements or connections it might have had on the coasts of America.

It was not till more than a century after the Genoese navigator had begun the conquest of that part of the world under the Spanish banner, that the Danes and Norwegians, who were then become one nation, cast their eyes upon that hemisphere, which was nearer to them than to any of those nations, who had already possessed themselves of different parts of it. They chose, however, to make their way into it by the shortest course, and therefore in 1619 sent captain Munk to find out a passage by the north-west into the Pacific ocean. His expedition was attended with as little success as those of many other navigators, both before and after him.

It may be presumed, that a disappointment in their first attempt would not entirely have disgusted the Danes ; and that they would have continued their American expeditions till they had succeeded in forming some settlements, that might have rewarded them for their trouble. If they lost sight of those distant regions, it was because they were forced to it by wars in Europe, which their imprudence as well as their weakness had brought upon them. Successive losses reduced them to a

desperate state, from which they would never have recovered, had not the assistance of Holland, and the steady perseverance of the citizens of Copenhagen, procured them a peace in 1660, less humiliating and less destructive than they had reason to fear.

THE government seized the first moment of tranquillity to examine the condition of the state. Like all other Gothic governments, it was divided between an elective chief, the nobility or senate, and the commons. The king enjoyed no other pre-eminence than that of presiding in the senate, and commanding the army. In the intervals between the Diets the government was in the hands of the senate: but all great affairs were referred to the Diets themselves, which were composed of the clergy, nobility, and commonalty.

THOUGH this constitution is formed upon the model of liberty, no country was less free than that of Denmark. The clergy had forfeited their influence from the time of the reformation. The citizens had not yet acquired wealth sufficient to make them considerable. These two orders were overwhelmed by that of the nobility, which was still influenced by the spirit of the original feudal system, that reduces every thing to force. The critical situation of the affairs of Denmark did not inspire this body of men with that justice or moderation, which the circumstances of the time required. They refused to contribute their proportion to the public expences; and by this refusal exasperated the members of the Diet. These, in
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the excess of their resentment, invested the king with an absolute, unlimited power; and the nobles, who had driven them to this act of desperation, found themselves obliged to follow their example.

AFTER this revolution, the most imprudent, and the most singular, that ever occurred in the annals of history, the Danes fell into a kind of lethargic state. To those great convulsions, which are occasioned by the clashing of important rights, succeeded the delusive tranquillity of servitude. A nation, which had filled the scene for several ages, appeared no more on the theatre of the world. In 1671, it just recovered so far from the trance, into which the access of despotism had thrown it, as to look abroad and take possession of a little American island, known by the name of St. Thomas.

THIS island, the farthest of the Caribbees towards the west, was totally uninhabited, when the Danes undertook to form a settlement upon it. They were at first opposed by the English, under pretence that some emigrants of that nation had formerly begun to clear it. The British ministry stopped the progress of this interference; and the colony were left to form plantations of sugar, such as a sandy soil of no greater extent than five leagues in length, and two and a half in breadth, would admit of.

So small a cultivation would never have given any importance to the island of St. Thomas; but the sea has hollowed out from its coast an excellent harbour, in which fifty ships may ride with security. So signal an advantage attracted both the

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English and French Buccaneers, who were desirous of exempting their booty from the duties they were subject to pay in the settlements belonging to their own nations. Whenever they had taken their prizes in the lower latitudes, from which they could not make the windward islands, they put into that of St. Thomas, to dispose of them. It was also the asylum of all merchant ships which frequented it as a neutral port in time of war. It was the mart, where the neighbouring colonies bartered their respective commodities, which they could not do elsewhere with so much ease and safety. It was the port, from which they continually dispatched vessels richly laden to carry on a clandestine trade with the Spanish coasts; in return for which, they brought back considerable quantities of metal and merchandizes of great value. In a word, St. Thomas was a market of very great consequence.

DENMARK, however, reaped no advantage from this rapid circulation. The persons who enriched themselves were foreigners, who carried their wealth to other situations. The mother country had no other communication with its colony than by a single ship, sent out annually to Africa to purchase slaves, which being sold in America, the ship returned home laden with the productions of that country. In 1719 their traffic increased by the clearing of the island of St. John, which is adjacent to St. Thomas, but not half so large. These slender beginnings would have required the addition of Crab island, or Bourriquen, where it had been attempted to form a settlement two years before.

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THIS island, which is from eight to ten leagues in circumference, has a considerable number of hills; but they are neither barren, steep, nor very high. The soil of the plains and vallies, which run between them, seems to be very fruitful; and is watered by a number of springs, the water of which is said to be excellent. Nature, at the same time that she has denied it a harbour, has made it amends by a multitude of the finest bays that can be conceived. At every step some remains of plantations, rows of orange and lemon trees, are still found; which make it evident, that the Spaniards of Porto-Rico, who are not further distant than five or six leagues, had formerly settled there.

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THE English, observing that so promising an island was without inhabitants, began to raise some plantations there towards the end of the last century; but they had not time to reap the fruit of their labour. They were surprized by the Spaniards, who murdered all the men, and carried off the women and children to Porto-Rico. This accident did not deter the Danes from making some attempts to settle there in 1717. But the subjects of Great Britain, reclaiming their ancient rights, sent thither some adventurers, who were at first plundered, and soon after driven off, by the Spaniards. The jealousy of these American tyrants extends even to the prohibiting of fishing-boats to approach any shore where they have a right of possession, though they do not exercise it. Too idle to prosecute cultivation, too suspicious to admit industrious neighbours, they condemn the Crab island

island to eternal solitude ; they will neither inhabit it themselves, nor suffer any other nation to inhabit it. Such an exertion of exclusive sovereignty has obliged Denmark to give up this Island for that of Santa Cruz.

SANTA CRUZ had a better title to become an object of national ambition. It is eighteen leagues in length, and from three to four in breadth. In 1643 it was inhabited by Dutch and English. Their rivallhip in trade soon made them enemies to each other. In 1646, after an obstinate and bloody engagement, the Dutch were beat, and obliged to quit a spot upon which they had formed great expectations. The conquerors were employed in securing the consequences of their victory ; when, in 1650, they were attacked and driven out in their turn by twelve hundred Spaniards, who arrived there in five ships. The triumph of these lasted but a few months. The remains of that numerous body, which were left for the defence of the island, surrendered without resistance to a hundred and sixty French, who had embarked from St. Christopher's, to make themselves masters of the island.

THESE new inhabitants lost no time to make themselves acquainted with a country so much in request. In a soil, in other respects excellent, they found only one river of a moderate size, which, gliding gently almost on a level with the sea, through a flat country, furnished only a brackish water. Two or three springs, which they found in the innermost parts of the island, made but feeble

feeble amends for this defect. The wells were for the most part dry. The construction of reservoirs required time. Nor was the climate more inviting to the new inhabitants. The island being flat, and covered with old trees, scarcely afforded an opportunity for the winds to carry off the poisonous vapours, with which its morasses clogged the atmosphere. There was but one remedy for this inconvenience; which was to burn the woods. The French set fire to them without delay; and, getting on board their ships, became spectators from the sea for several months of the conflagration they had raised in the island. As soon as the flames were extinguished, they went on shore again.

THEY found the soil fertile beyond belief. Tobacco, cotton, arnotto, indigo, and sugar, flourished equally in it. So rapid was the progress of this colony, that, in eleven years from its commencement, there were upon it eight hundred and twenty-two white persons, with a proportionable number of slaves. It was rapidly advancing to a degree of prosperity, which would have eclipsed the most flourishing settlements of the French nation, when such obstacles were thrown in the way of its activity as made it decline again. This decay was as sudden as its rise. In 1696 there were no more than one hundred and forty-seven men, with their wives and children, and six hundred and twenty-three blacks, remaining; and these were transported from hence to St. Domingo.

WRITERS, who take it for granted that the court of Versailles is always governed in its decisions
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by the most comprehensive views of profound policy, have supposed, that the neglect of Santa Cruz was the result of a determination to abandon the small islands, in order to unite all the strength, industry, and population in the large ones: but this is a mistaken notion. The resolution did not take its rise from the court, but from the farmers of the revenues, who found, that the contraband trade of Santa Cruz with St. Thomas was detrimental to their interests. The spirit of finance has in all times been injurious to commerce; it has destroyed the source from whence it sprang. Santa Cruz continued without inhabitants, and without cultivation, till 1733, when it was sold by France to Denmark for 738,000 livres*.

Conduct
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THIS northern power seemed likely to take deep root in America. Unfortunately, she laid her plantations under the yoke of exclusive privileges. Industrious people of all sects, particularly Moravians, strove in vain to overcome this great difficulty. Many attempts were made to reconcile the interests of the colonists and their oppressors, but without success. The two parties kept up a continual struggle of animosity, not of industry. At length the government, with a moderation not to be expected from its constitution, purchased, in 1754, the privileges and effects of the company. The price was fixed at 9,900,000 livres†, part of which was paid down, and the remainder in bills upon the treasury, bearing interest. From this time the navigation

* About 32,000*l.* sterling.

† About 433,000*l.* sterling.

navigation to the islands was opened to all the subjects of the Danish dominions.

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THE rapaciousness of the treasury unfortunately prevented the advantage which this arrangement would otherwise have produced. Indeed, the national productions and merchandise, in short, whatever they could draw from the first hand, and put on board Danish vessels, were to be shipped from the mother-country free of all duties; but, for all manufactures that did not fall under these descriptions, they demanded a tax of four per cent. All imports into the colonies paid five per cent. and all exports, six. Of American productions, what was consumed in the mother-country had two and a half per cent. laid upon it; and what was carried to foreign markets had one.

AT the same time that the trade to the islands recovered its natural independence, at the expence of these burthenome restrictions, that to Africa, which is the basis of it, was likewise laid open. The government had, above a century before, purchased of the king of Aquambou, the two forts of Fredericksburg and Christiansburg, situated on the Gold Coast, at a small distance from each other. The company, in virtue of its charter, had the sole possession of them; and exercised its privileges with that barbarity, of which the most polished European nations have set the example in these devoted climates. Only one of its agents had the resolution to renounce those cruelties, which custom had given a sanction to. So great

was

was the reputation of his humanity, and the confidence reposed in his probity, that the blacks would come from the distance of a hundred leagues to see him. The sovereign of a distant country sent his daughter to him with presents of gold and slaves, that Schilderop (for so this European, thus revered through all the coasts of Nigritia, was called) might give him a grandson. O virtue! still dost thou exist in the souls of these wretched beings, condemned to dwell with tigers, or groan beneath the yoke of their own species! They yet have hearts susceptible of the soft impressions of humanity and beneficence! Just and virtuous Dane! What monarch ever received so pure, so glorious a homage, as thy nation has seen thee enjoy? And where? Upon a sea, upon a continent degraded for ever by an infamous traffic, of men exchanged for arms! and children sold by their parents! of crimes and misfortunes, carried on through two centuries! We cannot sufficiently deplore such horrors; and, if we could, our lamentations would be useless.

THE exclusive privilege of purchasing negroes has, however, been abolished in Denmark, as in other states. All the subjects of this commercial nation are permitted to buy men in Africa. They pay only eighteen livres * a head for every one they carry into America. Thirty thousand slaves, including all ages and each sex, are employed already in their plantations, on which a poll-tax is laid of four livres ten sols †. The produce of their labours

* Between fifteen and sixteen shillings.

† About four shillings.

labours loads forty vessels, from one hundred and twenty, to three hundred tons burthen. The plantations, which pay to the treasury an annual rent of nine livres * for every thousand feet square, furnish to the mother country a little coffee and ginger, some wood for inlaying; eight hundred bales of cotton, which are chiefly carried to foreign markets; and fourteen millions weight of raw sugar, four-fifths of which are consumed in the mother country, and the rest is sold in the Baltic, or introduced into Germany by the way of Altena. Santa Cruz, though the most modern of all the Danish settlements, furnishes five-sevenths of this produce.

THIS island is divided into three hundred and fifty plantations by lines, which intersect each other at right angles. Each plantation contains one hundred and fifty acres, of forty thousand square feet each; so that it may occupy a space of twelve hundred common feet in length, by eight hundred in breadth. Two-thirds of this tract are fit for the growth of sugar, and the proprietor may occupy fourscore acres at a time, each of which will yield, one year with another, sixteen quintals of sugar, without reckoning the molasses. The remainder may be employed in other cultivations less lucrative. When the island comes to be entirely cleared, some towns may be built upon it; at present it has only the village of Christianstadt, built under the fort, which defends the principal harbour.

DENMARK

* About eight shillings.

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XII.

Reasons
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DENMARK cannot be ignorant, that the riches, which begin to flow from her colonies, do not belong entirely to herself. A great part goes to the English and Dutch, who, without living upon the islands, have formed the best plantations in them. New England supplies them with wood, cattle, and meal; and receives in exchange molasses and other commodities. They are obliged likewise to import their wines, linens, and silks. Even India is concerned in this trade. Upon a strict calculation, perhaps, it might appear, that what remains to the proprietors, after the commission, freight, and duties, are paid, is a very insignificant share. The situation of Denmark does not admit of her looking with indifference upon such a disadvantage. Every thing conspires to induce her to take proper measures for securing to herself the entire profits of her American possessions.

THE Danish territories in Europe were formerly independent of each other. Revolutions of a singular nature have united them into one kingdom. In the center of this heterogeneous composition are some islands, the principal of which is called Zealand. It has an excellent port, which in the eleventh century was but a little fishing town; it became a place of importance in the thirteenth; in the fifteenth, the capital of the kingdom; and, since the fire in 1728, which consumed sixteen hundred and fifty houses, a handsome city. To the south of these islands is that long and narrow peninsula, which the ancients called the Cimbric Chersonesus. Jutland, Sleswick, and Holstein, the
most

most important and extensive parts of this peninsula have been successively added to the Danish dominions. They have been more or less flourishing, in proportion as they have felt the effects of the restlessness of the ocean, which sometimes retires from their coasts, and sometimes overwhelms them. In these countries, as well as in those of Oldenburgh and Delmenhorst, which are subject to the same power, one may see a perpetual struggle, between the inhabitants and the sea, so well sustained on each part, that the success has always been equal. The inhabitants of such a country will be free from the moment they feel that they are not so, Mariners, islanders, and mountaineers, will not long remain under the disgrace of servitude.

Nor is Norway, which constitutes part of the Danish dominions, more adapted to servitude. It is covered with stones or rocks, and intersected by chains of barren mountains. Lapland contains only a few wild people, either settled upon the sea-coasts, for the sake of fishing, or wandering through frightful deserts, and subsisting by the chase, by their furs, and their rein-deer. Iceland is a miserable country, which has been many times overturned by volcanos and earthquakes, and conceals within its bowels a quantity of combustible matter, which in an instant may reduce it to a heap of ashes. With respect to Greenland, which the common people look upon as an island, and which geographers consider as united towards the west to the American continent; it is a vast and barren country, condemned by nature to be eternally

covered with snow. If ever these countries should become populous, they would be independent of each other, and of the king of Denmark, who thinks at present that he rules over their wild inhabitants, because he calls himself their king, while they know nothing of the matter.

THE climate of the Danish islands in Europe is not so severe as might be conjectured from the latitude they lie in. If the navigation of the gulfs, which surround them, is sometimes interrupted, it is not so much by ice formed there, as by what is driven thither by the winds, and by degrees collects into a mass. All the provinces which make part of the German continent, except Jutland, partake of the German temperature. The cold is very moderate even on the coasts of Norway. It rains there often during the winter, and the port of Berghen is scarcely once closed by ice, while that of Amsterdam, Lubec, and Hamburgh, is shut up ten times in the course of the year. It is true, that this advantage is dearly purchased by thick and perpetual fogs, which make Denmark a disagreeable and melancholy residence, and its inhabitants gloomy and low-spirited.

THE population of this empire is not proportioned to its extent. In the earlier ages it was ruined by continual emigration. The piratical enterprises, which succeeded to these, kept their numbers from increasing; and a total want of order and government put it out of their power to remedy evils of such magnitude and importance. The double tyranny of the prince over one order of

his subjects, who fancy themselves to be free; under the title of nobles, and of the nobility over a people entirely deprived of liberty, extinguishes even the hopes of an increase of population. The bills of mortality of all the states of Denmark, excepting Iceland, taken together, make the deaths in 1771 amount only to 55,125; so that, upon the calculation of thirty-two living to one dead person, the whole number of inhabitants does not amount to more than 1,764,000.

INDEPENDENT of many other causes, the weight of imposts is a great obstacle to their prosperity. There are fixed taxes payable on land, arbitrary ones collected by way of capitation, and daily ones levied on consumption. This oppression is the more unjust, as the crown possesses a very considerable domain, and has likewise a certain resource in the streights of the Sound. Six thousand nine hundred and thirty ships, which, if we may judge from the accounts of the year 1768, annually pass into or out of the Baltic, pay at the entrance of that sea about one *per cent.* upon all the commodities they are laden with. This species of tribute, which, though difficult to raise, brings in to the state two millions five hundred thousand livres *, is received in the bay of Elsinor under the guns of the castle of Cronenburg. It is astonishing, that the situation of this bay, and that of Copenhagen, should not have suggested the idea of forming a staple here, where all the commercial nations of the north and south

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might

might meet, and exchange the produce of their climates and their industry.

WITH the funds arising from tributes, domains, customs, and foreign subsidies, this State maintains an army of twenty-five thousand men, which is composed entirely of foreigners, and passes for the very worst body of troops in Europe. On the other hand, its fleet is in the highest reputation. It consists of thirty-two ships of the line, fifteen or sixteen frigates, and some galleys, the use of which, though wisely prohibited in other parts, cannot be avoided on the coasts of the Baltic, which are for the most part inaccessible to vessels of other kinds. Twenty-four thousand registered seamen, most of whom are continually employed, form a certain resource of their navy. To their military expences, the government has of late years added others, for the encouragement of manufactures and arts. If we add to these, four millions of livres * for the necessary expences and amusements of the court, and about the same sum for the interest of the national debt, amounting to about seventy millions †; we shall account for the distribution of about twenty-three millions of livres ‡, which form the revenue of the crown.

If it was with a view of securing these several branches, that the government, in 1736, prohibited the use of jewels, and gold and silver stuffs, we may venture to say, there were plainer and easier means to be used for that purpose. They should have removed a multitude of difficulties,

which

* 175,000*l*.

† About 3,062,000*l*.

‡ About 1,006,000*l*.

which clog the commercial intercourse of the citizens, and hinder a free communication between the different parts of the kingdom. The whale fishery, the Greenland and Iceland trade, once rescued from the bondage of monopolies, and that of the islands of Fero given up by the king, would have been pursued with new zeal. Their foreign connections would have received equal improvement, if the Barbary company had been suppressed, and all the members of the state had been released from the obligation, which was imposed upon them in 1726, to buy their wine, salt, brandy, and tobacco, at Copenhagen.

IN the present state of affairs, their exportations are but small. In the provinces on the German continent, they consist of five or six thousand beeves, three or four thousand horses, fit for cavalry, and some rye, which is sold to the Swedes and Dutch. For some years past, Denmark has consumed all the wheat, which Fionia and Aland used to export to other nations. Those two islands, as well as Zealand, have now no other traffic but in those magnificent harnesses, which are purchased at so dear a rate by all who love fine horses. The trade of Norway consists of herrings, timber, masts, tar, and iron. Lapland and Greenland produces furs. From Iceland they get cod, whale blubber, the oil of seals, and manatees, sulphur, and that luxurious down so celebrated under the name of eider-down.

WE shall close here the details, into which the commerce of Denmark has necessarily led us; and

which are sufficient to convince that power, that nothing contributes so much to her interest as having the sole possession and traffic of all the productions of her American islands. The more her possessions are limited in the new world, as they always will be within the torrid zone, the more attentive ought she to be, not to let any of the advantages she might draw from them escape her. In a state of mediocrity, the least negligence is attended with serious consequences. We shall soon have occasion to observe, that nations which are possessed even of extensive and rich territories, do not commit faults with impunity.

END OF THE TWELFTH BOOK.

B O O K XIII.

Settlement of the French in the American islands.

FRANCE, ever since the fatal catastrophe of the assassination of the best of her kings, had been in perpetual confusion, from the caprices of an intriguing queen, the oppressions of a rapacious foreigner, and the schemes of a weak-minded favourite. A despotic minister began to enslave her; when some of her sailors, excited as much by a desire of independence, as by the allurements of riches, sailed towards the Caribbee islands, in hopes of making themselves masters of the Spanish vessels that frequented those seas. Their courage had been successful on many occasions; but they were at last obliged, in order to refit, to seek for an asylum, which they found at St. Christopher's. This island appeared to them a proper place for securing the success of their expeditions, and they were therefore desirous of procuring a settlement upon it. Desnambuc, their chief, not only obtained leave to form an establishment there, but likewise to extend

First expeditions of the French to the islands.


tend it as far as he was either desirous or was able to do, in the great Archipelago of America. Government required for this permission merely, without giving any assistance to the project, or encouraging it with any protection, a twentieth part of the produce of every colony that might be founded.

The French islands are oppressed under exclusive privileges.

A company was formed in 1626, in order to reap the benefit of this concession. Such was the custom of those times, when trade and navigation were yet in too weak a state to be intrusted to private hands. This company obtained the greatest privileges. The government gave them the property of all the islands they should cultivate, and impowered them to exact a hundred weight of tobacco, or fifty pounds of cotton, of every inhabitant from sixteen to sixty years of age. They were likewise to enjoy an exclusive right of buying and selling. A capital of forty-five thousand livres * only, and which was never increased to three times that sum, procured them all these advantages.

It seemed impossible to rise to any great degree of prosperity with such inadequate means. Considerable numbers, however, of bold and enterprising men came from St. Christopher's, who hoisted the French flag in the neighbouring islands. Had the company, which excited this spirit of invasion by a few privileges, acted upon a consistent and rational plan, the state must soon have reaped some benefit from this restless disposition. But, unfortunately,

nately, an inordinate thirst of gain rendered them unjust and cruel ; a consequence that ever has, and ever will attend a spirit of monopoly.

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THE Dutch, apprized of this tyranny, came and offered provisions and merchandise on far more moderate terms, and made proposals which were readily accepted. This laid the foundation of a connection between those republicans and the colonists, that could never afterwards be broken ; and formed a competition, not only fatal to the company in the new world, where it prevented the sale of their cargoes, but even pursued them in all the markets in Europe, where the contraband traders underfold all the produce of the French islands. Discouraged by these deserved disappointments, the company sunk into a total state of inactivity, which deprived them of most of their emoluments, without lessening any of their expences. In vain did the government remit the stipulated reserve of the twentieth part of the profit ; this indulgence was not sufficient to restore their activity. Some of the proprietors were of opinion, that, by renouncing the destructive principles which had been hitherto adopted, they might still re-establish the affairs of the company : but the greater number thought it impracticable, notwithstanding all their advantages, to contend for superiority with such frugal private traders as their rivals were. This opinion occasioned a revolution. The company, to prevent their total ruin, and that they might not sink under the weight of their engagements, put
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their possessions up to auction: which were mostly bought up by their respective governors.

IN 1649, Boisseret purchased, for seventy-three thousand livres *, Guadalupe, Marigalante, the island called *the Saints*, and all the effects belonging to the company on these several islands: he afterwards parted with half in favour of Houel, his brother-in-law. In 1650, Duparquet paid but sixty-thousand livres † for Martinico, St. Lucia, Granada, and the Granadines. Seven years after, he sold Granada and the Granadines to Count Cerillac, for one third more than he had given for his whole purchase. In 1651, Malta purchased St. Christopher's, St. Martin, St. Bartholomew, Santa Cruz, and Tortuga, for forty thousand crowns ‡, which were paid by the commandant de Poincy, who governed those islands. The knights of Malta were to hold them in fief of the crown, and were not allowed to intrust any but a Frenchman with the administration of them.

THE new possessors enjoyed an unlimited authority, and disposed of the lands. All places, both civil and military, were in their gift. They had the right of pardoning those whom their deputies condemned to death; in short, they were so many petty sovereigns. It was natural to expect, as their domains were under their own inspection, that agriculture would make a rapid progress. This conjecture was in some measure realized, notwithstanding the contests which were necessarily sharp and frequent under such masters. However, this

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* 3,193 l. 15s. † 2,625 l. ‡ 5,250 l.

second state of the French colonies did not prove more beneficial to the nation than the first. The Dutch continued to furnish them with provisions, and to carry away the produce, which they sold indiscriminately to all nations, even to that which ought to have reaped the sole advantage of it, because it was her own property.

THE mother-country suffered considerably from this evil, and Colbert mistook the means of redress. That great man, who had for some time presided over the finances and trade of the kingdom, had begun upon a wrong plan. The habit of living with the farmers of the revenue under the administration of Mazarin, had accustomed him to consider money, which is but an instrument of circulation, as the source of every thing. He imagined that manufactures were the readiest way to draw it from abroad; and that in the work-shops were to be found the best resources of the state, and in the tradesmen the most useful subjects of the monarchy. To increase the number of these men, he thought it proper to keep the necessaries of life at a low price, and to discourage the exportation of corn. The production of materials was the least object of his care, and he bent his whole attention to the manufacturing of them. This preference of industry to agriculture became the reigning taste, and unfortunately this destructive system still prevails.

HAD Colbert entertained just notions of the improvement of lands, and of the encouragement it requires, and of the liberty the husbandman must enjoy,

enjoy, he would have pursued in 1664 a very different plan from that which he adopted. It is well known that he redeemed Guadalupe and its dependent islands for one hundred and twenty-five thousand livres *; Martinico for forty thousand crowns †; Granada for a hundred thousand livres ‡; and all the possessions of Malta for five hundred thousand livres §. So far his conduct deserved commendation: it was fit that he should restore so many branches of sovereignty to the body of the state. But he ought never to have submitted possessions of such importance to the oppressions of an exclusive company; a measure forbidden as much by past experience, as by reason. It is probable, that the ministry expected that a company, which was to be incorporated into those of Africa, Cayenne, and North-America, and interested in the trade that was beginning to be carried on upon the coasts of St. Domingo, would obtain a strong and permanent power; as well from the great connections it would have an opportunity of forming, as from the facility with which it might supply in one part the hopes it had sustained in another. They thought to secure the future splendour of the company, by lending them the tenth part of the amount of their capital, free from interest for four years, by permitting the exportation of all provisions duty-free into their settlements, and by prohibiting as much as they could the competition of the Dutch.

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* 5,468l. 15s. † 5,250l. ‡ 4,375l. § 21,875l.

NOTWITHSTANDING all these favours, the company was never in the least flourishing state. The errors they fell into seemed to increase in proportion to the number of concessions that had been injudiciously bestowed upon them. The knavery of their agents, the dejection of the colonists, the devastations of war, with other causes, concurred to throw their affairs into the utmost confusion. Their ruin was advancing, and appeared inevitable in 1674, when the state judged it proper to pay off their debts, which amounted to three millions five hundred and twenty-three thousand livres *, and to reimburse them their capital of one million two hundred eighty-seven thousand one hundred and eighty-five livres †. These generous terms restored to the body of the state those valuable possessions which had been hitherto as it were alienated from it. The colonies became entirely French, and all the citizens, without distinction, were at liberty to go and settle there, or to open a communication with them.

THEY were now freed from the chains under which they had so long been oppressed, and nothing seemed capable of abating for the future the active spirit of labour and industry. The transports of joy this event occasioned in the islands can hardly be expressed. Every individual gave a full scope to his ambition, and thought himself at the eve of making an immense fortune. If they were deceived in these expectations, this cannot be attributed either to their presumption or their indolence. Their hopes were very natural, and their whole conduct

The French islands recover their liberty. Obstacles which prevent their success.

* 1,54311. 5s.

† 56,3141. 6s. 10d. $\frac{1}{2}$



conduct was such as justified and confirmed them. Unfortunately, the prejudices of the mother country threw insurmountable difficulties in their way.

FIRST, it was required, even in the islands, that every free man, and every slave of either sex, should pay an annual poll-tax of a hundred weight of raw sugar. It was in vain urged that the condition imposed upon the colonies, to trade only with the mother country, was of itself a sufficient hardship, and a reason why they should be exempted from all other taxes. These representations were not attended to, as they ought to have been. Whether from necessity, or from ignorance on the part of government, those farmers who ought to have been assisted with loans without interest, or with gratuities, saw part of their harvest collected by greedy tax-gatherers; which, had it been returned into their own fertile fields, would gradually have increased their produce.

WHILE the islands were thus deprived of part of their produce, the spirit of monopoly was taking effectual measures in France to reduce the price of what was left them. The privilege of buying it up was limited to a few sea-ports. This was a manifest infringement of the essential rights vested in the other harbours of the kingdom; but to the colonies it proved a very unfortunate restriction, because it lessened the number of buyers and sellers on the coasts.

To this disadvantage another soon succeeded. The ministry had endeavoured to exclude all foreign vessels from those distant possessions, and had
succeeded,

succeeded, because they were in earnest. These navigators obtained from motives of interest the privilege that was denied them by the laws. They purchased of the French merchants passes to go to the colonies, where they took in their ladings, and carried them directly to their own country. This dishonesty might have been punished and suppressed by a variety of methods, but the most destructive one was adopted. All ships were required to give in their return, not only at home, but likewise at the ports from whence they had sailed. This restraint necessarily occasioned a considerable expence to no purpose, and could not fail of enhancing the price of American commodities.

THE sale of sugar, the most important of them, soon met with another check. The refiners, in 1682, petitioned that the exportation of raw sugars might be prohibited; in which they seemed to be influenced merely by public good. They alledged, that it was repugnant to all sound principles, that the original produce should be sent away to support foreign manufactures, and that the state should voluntarily deprive itself of the profits of so valuable a labour. This plausible reasoning made too great an impression upon Colbert; and the consequence of it was, that the refining of sugar was kept up at the same exorbitant price, and the art itself never received any improvement. This was not approved by the people who consumed this article: the French sugar-trade sank, and that of the rival nations was visibly increased.

SOME of the colonists, observing that the system was not dropped notwithstanding this fatal experiment, solicited leave to fine their own sugars: They were supplied with so many conveniencies to go through this process at a trifling expence, that they flattered themselves they might soon recover that preference they had lost in the foreign markets. This change was more than probable, had not every hundred weight of refined sugar they sent home been clogged with a duty of eight livres * on entering the kingdom. All that could be done, notwithstanding this heavy imposition, was to support the French refiners residing in the kingdom in their competition. The produce of the sugar-houses in France, and of those in the colonies, were entirely consumed within the empire; and thus an important branch of trade was given up, rather than it would be acknowledged that a mistake had been committed in prohibiting the importation of raw sugars.

FROM this period the colonies, which supplied twenty-seven millions weight of sugar, could not dispose of the whole of it in the mother country, which consumed but twenty millions. As the consumption of it decreased, no more was cultivated than what was absolutely necessary. This medium could only be settled in process of time; and, before this was effected, the commodity fell to an exceeding low price. This decrease in the value, which was also owing to the negligent manner of making it, was so great, that raw sugar, which sold for
fourteen

* Seven shillings.

fourteen or fifteen livres * *per* hundred in 1682, fetched no more than five or six †, in 1713.

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THE low price of the staple commodity would have made it impossible for the colonists to increase the number of their slaves, even if the government by its conduct had not contributed to this misfortune. The negro trade was always in the hands of exclusive companies, who imported but few, in order to be certain of selling them at a better price. We have good authority to assert, that in 1698 there were not twenty thousand negroes in those numerous settlements; and it may safely be affirmed, that most of these had been brought in by contraband traders. Fifty-four ships of a moderate size were sufficient to bring over the whole produce of these colonies.

THE French islands could not but sink under so many difficulties. If the inhabitants did not forsake them, and carry the fruit of their industry to other places, their perseverance must be attributed to some trifling advantages, which still kept them in hopes that their situation would be improved. The culture of tobacco, cocoa, indigo, cotton, and arnotto, was rather encouraged. Government supported it indirectly, by laying heavy duties on the foreign importation of these articles. This slight indulgence gave them time to wait for a happier revolution, which was brought about in 1716.

AT

* Between 11s. and 12s. † Not quite 5s. on an average.

AT this period, a plain and simple regulation was substituted in lieu of a multitude of equivocal orders, which rapacious officers of the revenue had from time to time extorted from the wants and weakness of government. The merchandise destined for the colonies was exempted from all taxes. The duties upon American commodities designed for home consumption, were greatly lowered. The goods brought over for exportation were to be entered and cleared out freely, upon paying three *per cent*. The duties laid upon foreign sugars were to be levied every where alike, without any regard to particular immunities, except in cases of re-exportation in the ports of Bayonne and Marseilles.

IN granting so many favours to her remote possessions, the mother country was not unmindful of her own interests. All merchandise, prohibited at home, was also forbidden in the colonies. To secure the preference to its own manufactures, it was enacted, that even such commodities as were not prohibited should pay duty on their entry into France, although they were destined for the colonies. Salt beef alone, which the mother country could not furnish in competition, was exempted from this duty.

THIS regulation would have been as beneficial as one as the times would admit of, if the edict had allowed that the trade from America, which till then had been confined to a few sea-ports, should be general; and if it had released ships from the necessity of returning to the place from whence they came. These restraints limited the number of seamen,

men, raised the expences of navigation, and prevented the exportation of the productions of the country. The persons who were then at the head of affairs ought to have been sensible of these inconveniences, and no doubt intended one day to restore to trade that freedom and spirit which alone can make it flourish. They were probably forced to sacrifice their own views to the clamours of men in power, who openly disapproved of whatever opposed their own interest.

NOTWITHSTANDING this weakness, the colonists, who had reluctantly given up the hopes of an excellent soil, bestowed their utmost industry upon it, as soon as they were allowed that liberty. Their success astonished all nations. If government, on the arrival of the French in the new world, had only foreseen what they learned from experience a century later, the state might soon have enjoyed, from the advantages of cultivation, that wealth which would have added more to its prosperity than conquests; it would not then have been as much ruined by its victories as by its defeats. Those prudent ministers, who repaired the losses of war by a happy revolution in trade, would not have had the mortification to see that Santa Cruz was evacuated in 1696, and St. Christopher's given up at the peace of Utrecht. Their concern would have been greatly heightened, could they have foreseen that in 1763 the French would be reduced to deliver up the Granades to the English. Strange infatuation of the ambition of nations, or rather of kings! After sacrificing thousands of lives to

Settlement
of the
French in
Guiana.
Revolutions of that
colony.
Its advantages and
its inconveniences.

acquire and to preserve a remote 'possession, a greater number must still be lavished to lose it. Yet France has some important colonies left: let us begin with Guiana, which lies to windward of all the rest.

THE great extent of this immense country is evident from its very boundaries. It is limited on the east by the ocean; on the north by the Oroonooko; on the south by the Amazons; and on the west by the Rio-negro, which joins those two rivers the largest in South-America. Guiana, in this position, may be considered as an island, at least two hundred leagues over from north to south, and above three hundred from east to west.

THE people, who roved about this vast tract, so fortunately bounded, before the arrival of the Europeans, were divided into several nations, none of which were very numerous. Their manners were the same as those of the savages of the southern continent. The Caribs only, who from their numbers and courage were more turbulent than the rest, distinguished themselves by a remarkable custom in the choice of their chiefs. To be qualified to govern such a people, it was necessary a man should have more strength, more intrepidity, and more knowledge, than the rest of his brethren; and that he should give evident and public proofs of these superior qualifications.

THE man, therefore, who aspired to the honour of commanding his brethren, must previously be well acquainted with all the places fit for hunting and fishing, and with all the springs and roads. He

was

was obliged to endure long and severe fasts; and was afterwards exposed to carry burthens of an enormous weight. He used to pass several nights as a centinel, at the entrance of the carbet or principal hut. He was buried up to the waist in an ant's nest, where he remained for a considerable time exposed to sharp and bloody stings. If in all these situations he shewed a strength and fortitude fit to support the dangers and hardships incident to the lives of savages; if he was one who could endure every thing, and fear nothing; he was declared fit to be their chief. He withdrew, however, as if conscious of what his intended dignity required, and concealed himself under thick bushes. The people went out to seek him in a retreat, which made him more deserving of the post he seemed to decline. Each of the assistants trod upon his head, to shew him, that, being raised from the dust by his equals, it was in their power to sink him into it again, if ever he should be forgetful of the duties of his station. Such was the ceremony of his coronation. After this political lesson, all the bows and arrows were thrown at his feet; and the nation was obedient to his laws, or rather to his example.

SUCH were the inhabitants of Guiana, when the Spaniard Alphonso de Ojeda first landed there in 1499, with Americus Vespucius and John de la Cosa. He went over a part of it; but this expedition afforded him only a superficial knowledge of so vast a country. Many others were undertaken at a greater expence, but turned out still more unsuccessful.

They were, however, still continued, from a motive which ever did and ever will deceive mankind.

A REPORT prevailed, though its origin could not be discovered, that, in the interior parts of Guiana, there was a country, known by the name of *del Dorado*, which contained immense riches in gold and precious stones; more mines and treasures than ever Cortez and Pizarro had found. This fable not only inflamed the ardent imagination of the Spaniards, but fired every nation in Europe.

SIR Walter Raleigh in particular, one of the most extraordinary men that ever appeared in a country abounding in singular characters, was seized with this enthusiasm. He was passionately fond of every thing that was magnificent; he enjoyed a reputation superior to that of the greatest men; he had more knowledge than those whose immediate pursuit was learning; he possessed a freedom of thinking uncommon in those days; and had a kind of romantic turn in his sentiments and behaviour. This determined him, in 1595, to undertake a voyage to Guiana; but he returned without discovering any thing relative to the object of his voyage. On his return, however, he published an account, full of the most brilliant impostures that ever amused the credulity of mankind.

THE French had not waited for this deceitful account to turn their views towards so celebrated a country. They had long before adopted the general prejudice with a vivacity peculiar to themselves. While the hopes of their rivals were en-

gaged on the side of the Oronooko, they sought to realize their own expectations upon the river Amazon. After many fruitless excursions, they at length settled on the island of Cayenne in 1635.

SOME merchants of Rouen, thinking that this settlement might prove advantageous, united their stock in 1643. They intrusted their affairs in the hands of a man of a ferocious disposition, named Poncet de Bretigny, who, having declared war both against the colonists and the savages, was soon massacred. This catastrophe having checked the ardour of the associates, a new company was established in 1651, which seemed to promise to be much more considerable than the former. They set out with so large a capital as to enable them to collect, in Paris itself, seven or eight hundred colonists. These embarked on the Seine, in order to sail down to Havre de Grace. Unfortunately, the virtuous Abbé de Marivault, who was the principal promoter of this undertaking, and was to have had the management of it as director-general, was drowned as he was stepping into his boat. Roiville, a gentleman of Normandy, who was going over to Cayenne as general, was assassinated in the passage. Twelve of the principal adventurers, who were the perpetrators of this act, and had undertaken to put the colony into a flourishing condition, behaved there in as atrocious a manner as might be expected from so horrid a beginning. They hanged one of their own number; two died; three were banished to a desert island; the rest abandoned themselves to every kind of excess. The

commandant of the citadel deserted to the Dutch with part of his garrison. The remainder, that had escaped hunger, poverty, and the fury of the savages, which had been roused by numberless provocations, thought themselves happy in being able to get over to the Leeward islands in a boat and two canoes. They abandoned the fort, ammunition, arms, and merchandize, with five or six hundred dead bodies of their wretched companions, fifteen months after they had landed on the island.

A NEW company was formed in 1663, under the direction of La Barre, master of requests. Their capital was no more than two hundred thousand livres *. The assistance, they obtained from the ministry, enabled them to expel the Dutch, who, under the conduct of Spranger, had taken possession of the lands granted to them, after they had been evacuated by their countrymen. A year after, this inconsiderable body made a part of the great company which united the possessions and privileges of all the rest. Cayenne returned into the hands of government at that happy period which restored freedom to all the colonies. It was taken in 1667 by the English; and in 1676, by the Dutch; but has never even been attacked since that time.

THIS settlement, so often overturned, had but just begun to be re-established, and to enjoy some tranquillity, when great hopes were entertained of its success. Some pirates, laden with spoils they had gathered in the South Seas, came and fixed

* 8,750l.

there; and, what was of greater consequence, resolved to employ their treasures in the cultivation of the lands. It was probable, that their plan would be prosecuted with vigour, because their means were great; when Ducasse, who was reputed an able seaman, came with some ships, in 1688, and proposed to them the plundering of Surinam. This excited their natural turn for plunder; the new colonists became pirates again, and almost all the inhabitants followed their example.

THE expedition proved unfortunate. Some of the besiegers fell in the attack; the rest were taken prisoners, and sent to the Caribbee islands, where they settled. The colony has never recovered this loss. Far from extending into Guiana, it has never been in a prosperous state at Cayenne.

THIS island is only parted from the continent by two rivers; and may be about sixteen leagues in circumference. By a particular formation, very rarely to be met with in islands, and which renders it little fit to be inhabited, the land is high near the water side, and low in the middle. Hence it is intersected with so many morasses, that all communication is impracticable, without taking a great circuit. Until the lands that are under water are drained, and secured from future inundations by dykes properly raised, there will be no place fit for culture, except the rising grounds. There are some small tracts of an excellent soil to be found there; but the generality is dry, sandy, and soon exhausted. The only town in the colony is defended by a covert-way, a large ditch, a very good mud

mud rampart, and five bastions. In the middle of the town is a pretty considerable eminence; of which a redoubt has been made that is called the fort, where forty men might capitulate after the place had been taken. The entrance into the harbour is through a narrow channel; and ships can only get in at high water through the rocks and reefs that are scattered about this pass.

THE first produce of Cayenne was the arnotto. This is a red dye, called by the Spaniards *achiote*, into which they dip the white wool, whatever colour they intend to give it. The tree that yields this dye has a reddish bark, and large, strong, and hard leaves, of a dark green colour. It is as high as a plumb-tree, and more bushy. The flowers, that grow in bunches, not unlike wild roses, are succeeded twice a year by pods as prickly as the shell of a chesnut, but smaller. They contain some little seeds of a pale red, and these make the arnotto.

As soon as one of the eight or ten pods that grow in a bunch opens of itself, the rest may be gathered. All the seeds are then to be taken out, and thrown directly into large troughs, full of water. When the fermentation begins, the seeds are to be bruised several times with wooden pestles, till the skin is entirely taken off. The whole is then poured into sieves made of rushes, which retain all the solid parts, and let out a thick, reddish, and fetid liquor into iron coppers prepared to receive it. As it boils, the scum is skimmed off, and kept in large pans. When the liquor yields no more scum, it is thrown away as useless, and the scum poured back into the copper.

THIS scum, which is to be boiled for ten or twelve hours, must be constantly stirred with a wooden spatula, to prevent its sticking to the copper, or turning black. When it is boiled enough, and somewhat hardened, it is spread upon boards to cool. It is then made up into cakes of two or three pounds weight, and the whole process is finished.

FROM the culture of the arnotto, Cayenne proceeded to that of cotton, of indigo, and at last of sugar. It was the first of all the French colonies that attempted to grow coffee; which was brought thither in 1721 by some deserters, who purchased their pardon by conveying it from Surinam, where they had taken refuge. Ten or twelve years after, they planted cocoa. In 1752, 260,541 pounds weight of arnotto, 80,363 pounds of sugar, 17,919 pounds of cotton, 26,881 pounds of coffee, 91,916 pounds of cocoa, 618 trees for timber, and 104 planks, were exported from the colony. All these articles were the result of the labour of ninety French families, a hundred and twenty-five Indians, and fifteen hundred blacks; which made up the whole of the colony.

SUCH, and weaker still, was the state of Cayenne, when, in 1763, the court of Versailles endeavoured to render it extremely flourishing, by a system which occasioned a general astonishment. The French had then just emerged from the horrors of an unsuccessful war. The situation of affairs had determined the ministry to purchase peace with the cession

sion of several important colonies. It appeared equally necessary to make the nation forget her distresses, and the errors that had been the cause of them. The prospect of better fortune might amuse the people, and silence their clamours; while their attention was removed from possessions the nation had lost, and turned towards Guiana, which, it was pretended, would compensate all their misfortunes.

THIS vast country, which was long distinguished by the pompous title of Equinoctial France, was not the sole property of that power, as she had formerly pretended. The Dutch, by settling to the north, and the Portuguese to the south, had confined the French between the rivers of Maroni and Vincent Pinçon; which limits were fixed by several treaties. These boundaries were equally distant from Cayenne; and the extent between them comprehends no less than a hundred leagues of the sea-coast. The navigation along this coast is extremely difficult, on account of the rapidity of the currents, and is continually obstructed by small islands, banks of sand, and of hardened mud, and by strong mangroves closely entangled that extend two or three leagues into the sea. There is no harbour, and few places where ships can land; and the lightest sloops often meet with insuperable obstacles. The large and numerous rivers that water this continent are not more navigable. Their bed in many places is barred by vast rocks, which makes it impossible to sail through them. The shore, which is generally flat, is mostly overflowed

by the spring-tides. In the inland country, most of the low lands become morasses also in the rainy season. Then there is no safety but upon the higher grounds. These inundations, however, that suspend all the labours of husbandry, contribute to render the heat more supportable, without producing that malignant influence upon the climate which might be apprehended from them. Uncertain conjectures can only be formed of the population of the inland parts. That of the sea-coast may amount to nine or ten thousand men, divided into several nations, the most powerful of which are the Galibis. Some missionaries, by great attention and perseverance, have found means to fix some of those roving nations, and even to reconcile them to the French, against whom they had with reason entertained the strongest prejudices. The first adventurers who frequented this country, took away or bought men, whom they condemned to the hardest labours of slavery on the very soil where they were born free, or sold them to the colonists of the Caribbee islands. Their common price at first was twenty pistoles * a head. Happily for the inhabitants, they rose so exorbitantly in their demands, that no purchasers could be found. It was thought preferable to purchase negroes, who were almost as expert at hunting and fishing, and better skilled in the labours of the great plantations that were then carrying on in every part.

GUIANA, as we have described it, appeared a very valuable resource to the French ministry, re-

* 16l. 15s.

duced as they were to the necessity of correcting the great mistakes they had committed. A few considerations will enable us to judge of their motives.

AMERICA presents itself to Europe under two different points of view. It offers to those, who emigrate from us, two zones to be peopled and cultivated, the torrid, and the northern temperate zone. The first, more fruitful, and richer, but merely so in articles of luxury and indulgence, must therefore have afforded the brightest prospect, and sooner given a more extensive influence to those powers that made themselves masters of it. This zone being more apparently calculated for despotism, because the heat of the climate, and the fertility of the soil, dispose men to become slaves for the sake of ease and pleasure, was therefore most fit to be in the possession of absolute monarchies, and to be peopled with slaves, who should only cultivate such productions as were proper to enervate the vigour and elasticity of the fibres, by increasing the number of our most lively sensations. The mines that abound there, affording the means of obtaining wealth without labour, must naturally hasten the decay of states, by the occasion they afford of exciting our desires and our facility of enjoyments. The nations that inhabit that zone must, therefore, either sink into indolence, or engage in undertakings suggested by an ambition which becomes so much the more dangerous from its first successes. As those states mistook the consequences or signs of wealth for the original source and cause of political

tical strength, they imagined, that with money they could keep the nations in their pay, as they kept the negroes in their chains; and never considered that the very means which would procure them allies, would turn them into so many powerful enemies; who, uniting their arms with the riches of foreign powers, would exert this double force to subvert the whole.

THE temperate zone of North-America could only attract free and laborious people. It furnishes no productions but what are common and necessary; and which, for that very reason, are a constant source of wealth and strength. It favours population, by supplying materials for that quiet and peaceful species of husbandry which fixes and multiplies families; and, as it does not excite inordinate desires, is a security against invasion. It reaches through an immense continent, and presents a large extent of country, on every side open to navigation. Its coasts are washed by a sea which is generally navigable, and abounds with harbours. The colonists are not at so great a distance from the mother country; they live in a climate more analogous to their own; and in a situation that is fit for hunting, fishing, husbandry, and for all the manly exercises and labours which improve the strength of the body, and are preservatives against the vices that taint the mind. Thus, in America as in Europe, the north will have the superiority over the south. The one will be covered with inhabitants and plantations: while the other will lavish its voluptuous liquors, and its golden mines.

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The one will be able to civilize the savage nations by their intercourse with a free people ; the other will only produce a monstrous feeble mixture of a race of slaves with a nation of tyrants, which can never acquire any degree of strength.

It was of great importance to the southern colonies to have their resources for population and strength in the north, where they might exchange the commodities of luxury for those of necessity, and keep open a communication that might afford them succours if they were attacked ; a retreat in case they were defeated, and a supply of land forces to balance the weakness of their naval resources.

BEFORE the last war, the French southern colonies enjoyed this advantage. Canada, by its situation, the warlike genius of its inhabitants, their alliances with the Indian nations in friendship with the French, and fond of the frankness and freedom of their manners, might balance, or at least give umbrage to, New-England. The loss of that great continent determined the French ministry to seek for support from another. Guiana was thought a very proper situation for this purpose, if a free and national population could be established there, which might be able to resist foreign attacks, and, in course of time, to furnish a speedy assistance to the other colonies, when circumstances might require it.

SUCH was evidently the system of the minister. He did not imagine, that a part of the world thus inhabited, could ever enrich the mother-country by the produce of such commodities as are peculiar to
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the southern colonies. He was too intelligent not to know, that there is no such thing as selling, without complying with the general run of the market; and that this cannot be done but by producing saleable commodities at the same rate as other nations can afford them; and that labours, executed by free men, must of necessity bear a much higher price than those that are exacted from slaves.

THE measures were directed by an active minister. As a wise politician who does not sacrifice safety to wealth, he only proposed to raise a bulwark to protect the French possessions. As a philosopher who feels for his fellow-creatures, who knows and respects the rights of humanity, he wished to people these fertile but desert regions with free men. But genius, especially when too impatient of success, cannot foresee every circumstance. The mistake proceeded from supposing, that Europeans would be able to undergo the fatigues of preparing lands for cultivation under the torrid zone; that men, who quitted their own country only in hopes of living with greater satisfaction in another, would accommodate themselves to the precarious subsistence of a savage life in a worse climate than that which they had left; or, lastly, that it would be an easy matter to establish an intercourse of importance between Guiana and the French islands.

THIS bad system, which the government was drawn into by a set of enterprising men, who were either misled by their presumption, or who

sacrificed the public good to their own private views, was as extravagantly executed as it had been inconsiderately adopted. Every thing was blended together, without any principle of legislation, and without considering in what manner nature had adapted the several lands to the men who were to inhabit them. The inhabitants were divided into two classes, the proprietors and the mercenaries. It was not considered, that this division, at present established in Europe and in most civilized nations, was the consequence of wars, of revolutions, and of the numberless chances which time produces; that it was the effect of the progress of civilization, not the basis and foundation of society, which in its origin requires that all its members should have some property. Colonies, which are new populations and new societies, ought to adhere to this fundamental rule. It was broken through at the very first establishment of the colony, by allotting lands in Guiana to those only who were able to advance a certain fund for the cultivation of them. Others, whose desires were tempted with uncertain hopes, were excluded from this division of lands. This was an error equally contrary to sound policy and humanity. Had a portion of land been given to every new inhabitant that was sent over to this barren and desert country, each person would have cultivated his own spot in proportion to his strength or abilities; one, by the means his money would have afforded him; another, by his own labour. It was necessary that those, who were possessed of a capital, should

neither be discouraged, because they were men of great importance to a rising colony ; nor that they should have an exclusive preference given them, lest it should prevent them from having assistants who might be willing to be dependent on them. It was also indispensably necessary, that every member of the new colony should be offered some property, with which he might employ his labour, his industry, his money ; in a word, his greater or lesser powers to his advantage. It ought to have been foreseen, that Europeans, in whatever situation they were, would not quit their own country, but with the hopes of improving their fortune ; and that deceiving their hopes and confidence in this respect would be an effectual way to ruin the colony intended to be established.

B O O K
XIII.

IN vain did government supply the colonists with two years subsistence. This was too great a supply at one time. It must spoil, either in the transport, or at the end of the voyage. The very passage in which some part must be consumed, and the rest injured, could not but make these provisions dear, scarce, and noxious. A hot climate, and a damp country, would be additional causes of putrefaction among the provisions, and of sickness and mortality among the men. It would have been a folly to pretend to carry over from Europe to Guiana a sufficient quantity of live cattle, to furnish fresh meat every day for a numerous colony. Most of them would have died, either in the passage, or at their arrival ; for, as animals are more immediately under the influence of nature, they are the more affected by the sudden

alterations of the air, and by the change of climate and food.

THE increase of cattle should have preceded that of men. Both should have multiplied by degrees ; and the seeds of culture in that distant region should have been first prepared, before the inhabitants were become too numerous. The first exports should have been inconsiderable, and attended with every advance, every assistance necessary for clearing the lands. In proportion as the infant colony should have produced enough, and even more than was necessary for its own consumption, the purchase of the overplus would have become a source of increase. Agriculture and population would then have mutually assisted and promoted each other. The new colonists would have excited others to follow their example ; and society, like individuals, would have arrived at its proper strength and maturity in the space of twenty years.

THESE very plain and natural reflections never occurred to the contrivers of this scheme. Twelve thousand men, after a tedious navigation, were landed upon dreary and inhospitable shores. It is well known, that, almost throughout the torrid zone, the year is divided into two seasons, the dry, and the rainy. In Guiana, such heavy rains fall, from the beginning of November to the end of May, that the lands are either overflowed, or at least unfit for tillage. Had the new colonists arrived there in the beginning of the dry season, and been placed on the lands destined for them, they would have had time to put their habitations in

order, to cut down or burn the woods, and to plough and sow their fields.

BOOK
XIII.

FOR want of these precautions, they knew not where to bestow such multitudes of people as were constantly pouring in just at the rainy season. The island of Cayenne might have been a proper place for the reception and refreshment of the new comers, till they could have been disposed of; there they might have found lodging and assistance. But the false opinion which prevailed, that the new colony must not be intermixed with the old, deprived them of this resource. In consequence of this prejudice, twelve thousand men, devoted to destruction, were landed on the banks of the Kourou, on a ridge of sand, amidst a number of unwholesome little islands, and only sheltered under a miserable awning. In this situation, totally inactive, and weary of existence, they gave themselves up to all the irregularities that idleness necessarily produces among men of the lowest class, removed far from their native country, and placed under a foreign sky: there they fell into a state of misery, and were seized with contagious distempers, the necessary consequences of such a situation; and their wretched life was at length terminated in all the horrors of despair. Their fate will ever call aloud for vengeance on those who either invented, or promoted this destructive scheme; a scheme, which, though attended with such considerable expences, terminated in the sudden destruction of so many unfortunate men; as if the devastations of war, which they were intended to repair, had not

swept away a sufficient number in the course of eight years.

THAT nothing might be wanting to complete this horrid tragedy, fifteen hundred men, who had escaped this dreadful calamity, were washed away by the floods. They were distributed upon lands, where they were overflowed at the return of the rains, and every one of them perished, without leaving behind them any posterity, or the least trace of their memory.

THE state has deeply lamented this loss, and has impeached and punished the principal author of it. But how dreadful is it for our country, for the subjects, for every man who is interested in the lives of his fellow citizens, to see them thus lavished upon ruinous enterprises by an absurd jealousy of authority, which enjoins the most rigorous secrecy upon all public operations. Is it not then the interest of the whole nation that her rulers should be well informed? And how can they be so, but from collecting general information? Why should projects, of which the people are to be both the object and the instrument, be concealed from them? Can the will be commanded without the judgment, or can we inspire courage without confidence? The only true information is to be obtained from public writings, where truth appears undisguised, and falsehood fears to be detected. Secret memoirs, private schemes, are commonly the work of artful and interested men, who insinuate themselves into the cabinets of persons in administration by dark, oblique, and indirect ways.

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When a prince or a minister has acted according to the opinion of the public, or of enlightened men; if he is unfortunate, he cannot on any account be blamed. But, when enterprizes are undertaken without the advice or against the sense of the people; when events are brought on unknown to those whose lives and fortunes are exposed by them: what can this be but a secret league, a combination of a few individuals, against society in general? Can it be possible, that authority should think itself degraded by an intercourse with the citizens? Or will men in power for ever treat the rest of mankind with so great a degree of contempt, as not even to desire that the injuries they have done them should be forgiven?

WHAT has been the consequence of that catastrophe, in which so many subjects, so many foreigners, have been sacrificed to the illusions of the French ministry with respect to Guiana? This unhappy climate has been inveighed against with all the rancour with which resentment and misfortune can aggravate its real evils. It has been asserted, that colonies would never be brought to flourish there, even if those very principles of culture and administration, by which all other colonies have prospered were to be adopted. This opinion is grounded upon the barrenness of the soil, the excessive dampness of the climate, the prodigious swarms of ants that infest the country, and the facility the slaves have of deserting from the manufactures. These complaints are in some degree true, but somewhat exaggerated.

BECAUSE the island of Cayenne is not very fertile, it cannot surely without injustice be inferred, that the neighbouring continent is entirely unfit for cultivation. Those, who make this inference, have only observed the marshy coasts of this vast country. But those who have penetrated into the inland parts, are of a very different opinion : and the few experiments already made, contradict a prejudice founded merely on the first appearances.

THE apprehensions arising from the duration of the rains are not so ill-grounded. This defect in the seasons endangers the lives of the cultivators, increases the fatigues of their labour, and renders their crops precarious, especially that of sugar, which has hitherto been less plentiful on the continent, and inferior in quality to that which comes from the islands. But it is not to be doubted, that the inundations will in a great measure subside, when the woods are cleared away, which have covered these vast deserts from the beginning of the world. Trees attract the rains and dews ; and keep the ground damp by excluding the rays of the sun. If we remove these great vegetables, which by their deep roots and wide-extended bows, absorb and pump up all the juices of vegetation that circulate either in the internal part, or in the atmosphere of the globe, nothing will remain but a moisture which will be serviceable to the plantations.

AT present the greater part of them are overrun with ants, and many to such a degree as sometimes to baffle the greatest hopes of success. But this is an evil that every new settlement
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in America has experienced, and which in time they have been freed from. Many do not now suffer any inconvenience from it; the rest but little. Guiana will be less subject to it, in proportion as the lands are cleared.

As to the negroes, if there is any danger of their running away, of their collecting together in a body, and intrenching themselves in the woods, it is the tyranny of their masters that compels them to it. No doubt this inconvenience is greater on the continent than in the islands; but the desertion of these unhappy men will be prevented whenever their condition is made tolerable. The law of necessity, which restrains even tyrants, will prescribe that moderation in Guiana that humanity alone should inspire every where.

THE obstacle least attended to, though the most insuperable of all, is the difficulty, nay the impossibility, of undertaking any considerable plantations on the coast of Guiana. That coast which lies to the south of Cayenne, for the space of twenty leagues, presents only a marshy ground, which is overflowed by the tides twice a month, at the new and full moon, and dried up again in the interval between these two periods. The coast, on the north, is constantly under water for six months in the year, and its fertility must therefore be very precarious. The sugar-cane dies there the first time it bears, which increases labour without augmenting the produce. In other respects this part of the coast is also very unwholesome. An easterly wind constantly drives thither all the malignant vapours

pours which the heat of the sun draws from the swampy grounds of the southern coast.

THE rivers of Cayenne, Aprouac, Oyapoko, Kourou, and Maroni, are not subject to the same inconveniences in their course. Upon the river Sinemary there still are five or six hundred men subsisting, who escaped from the general disasters of the colony. They enjoy the most perfect health; their little plantations succeed to the utmost of their wishes; and the increase of their cattle is prodigious. The same advantages are to be expected from the highest borders of the other rivers; some of them are even more fit for navigation, either in boats, or in small vessels.

ALL these discussions evidently shew that France ought not to give up the cultivation of Guiana. At first, the sugar will be watery and insipid, and there will be but little of it; but it has seldom been better in any grounds that have been newly cleared. Coffee, cocoa, and cotton, are better in Guiana than in the Caribbee islands. Tobacco must thrive there. Indigo, which formerly grew there in great plenty, has degenerated, but may be retrieved by fresh seeds from St. Domingo. The arnotto is of little value there, but the sale of it is certain. The Vanilla is the natural produce of the country; but no profit has been hitherto made of it, because the pods rot as soon as they are gathered. It would, however, be an easy matter to inquire into the method of managing the trees that bear it, and to enrich Guiana with this branch of trade.

LARGE exportations of rice, wood, cattle, and salt-fish, can hardly be expected from thence. The colony might, indeed, attempt these things; but a good market would be wanting. The only one within a proper distance would be the French windward islands, and this could never be very considerable. Those settlements having nothing to give in exchange for these commodities, the expences of navigation would necessarily make the trade very inconsiderable.

BUT still this last connection may fail, and yet that between Guiana and the mother-country will not suffer in the least. The whole will depend upon the encouragement the court of Versailles may bestow upon the establishment. It is not attended with more difficulties than that of Surinam was, where more constant labour and greater means have never produced so much increase as in the islands. Yet Surinam is at this day covered with rich plantations. Why should not France give Guiana the same advantages as this colony of the Dutch enjoys? This may be done by bestowing such assistances and gratuities as every state ought to dispense when large tracts of land, which may turn out to be of great utility, are to be cleared. These clearings of rude lands are in reality, as it were, so many conquests over a chaos of confusion, for the general advantage of mankind; different from those conquests by which whole provinces are depopulated and laid waste, in order to take possession of them; which cost the blood of two nations to enrich neither; which must be defended

at a great expence, and filled with troops for many ages, before the possession of them can be quietly secured. Guiana requires nothing but labour and inhabitants. How powerful then the motives for encouraging both !

THIS colony may at pleasure multiply its cattle and increase its subsistence. It would be difficult to invade it, and still more to block it up ; it will, therefore, never be conquered. The Caribbee islands, on the contrary, as they have once been taken, are looked upon with regret by a nation exasperated at the restitution of them. Her chagrin makes it probable she will always be disposed to recover by force of arms what she has lost by negociation. The well-grounded confidence she places in her navy, and in the flourishing condition of her northern colonies, will, perhaps, soon engage her in a fresh war, in order to retake what was given up at the last peace. Should fortune again favour the wise administration of her happy government ; should a people, encouraged by victories of which they themselves only reap the benefits, always have the superiority over a nation that fights only for her kings ; Guiana would, at least, afford a great resource, where all such articles as custom has made necessary, might be cultivated, and for which an extravagant duty must be paid to foreigners, if the nation cannot be supplied with them from her own colonies.

NOTHING has yet been done towards securing the advantages which this settlement presents. In January 1769, it consisted only of 1,291 free men, and

and 8,047 slaves. The herds did not amount to more than 1,923 head of black cattle, and 1,077 of small. The produce of the colony was even inadequate to these means, inconsiderable as they were, because the works were carried on by white men without skill, and blacks under no degree of subordination. A greater degree of knowledge, and a better discipline, will in time take place. Till that happy period arrives, let us turn our thoughts from the consideration of Guiana to that of St. Lucia.

THE English took possession of this island without opposition, in the beginning of the year 1639. They lived there peaceably for a year and a half, when a ship of their own nation, which had been overtaken by a calm off Dominica, carried off some Caribs, who were come in their canoes to bring them fruit. This violence occasioned the savages of St. Vincent and Martinico to join the offended savages; and, in August 1640, they all attacked the new colony. In their fury, they massacred every one that opposed them. The few who escaped their vengeance, quitted for ever a settlement that could not have arrived to any considerable degree of prosperity.

The possession of St. Lucia, for a long time disputed, is at last ceded to the French.

IN the first ages of the world, before civil societies were formed and polished, all men in general had a common right to every thing upon earth. Every one was free to take what he pleased for his own use, and even to consume it, if it were of a perishable nature. The use that was thus made of a common right, supplied the place of property. As soon as any one had in this manner taken possession

possession of any thing, it could not be taken from him by another without injustice. It was in this point of view, which can only be applied to the primitive state of nature, that the European nations considered America when it was first discovered. They paid no regard to the natives, and imagined they were sufficiently authorised to seize upon any country, if no other nation of our continent were in possession of it. Such was constantly and uniformly the only public right observed in the new world, and which men have not scrupled to avow and attempt to justify in this century during the late hostilities.

FROM these principles, which the author of a philosophical history of commerce would disdain to approve, St. Lucia was to belong to any power that could or would people it. The French attempted it first. They sent over forty inhabitants in 1650, under the conduct of Rouffelan, a brave, active, prudent man, and singularly beloved by the natives, on account of his having married one of their women. His death, which happened four years after, put a stop to the general good he had begun to effect. Three of his successors were murdered by the discontented Caribs, who were dissatisfied with their behaviour to them; and the colony was declining when it was taken in 1664 by the English, who evacuated it in 1666.

THEY had scarce left it, when the French appeared again on the island. Whatever was the cause, they had not greatly increased their number, when the enemy, that had before driven them out, again

again forced them to quit their habitations twenty years after. Some, instead of evacuating the island, took refuge in the woods. As soon as the conquerors, who had made only a temporary invasion, were gone, they resumed their labours; but this continued only for a short time. The war, which soon after raged in Europe, made them apprehensive that they might fall a prey to the first privateer that should be desirous of plundering them; with a view, therefore, of obtaining greater tranquillity, they removed to other French settlements, which were either stronger, or might expect to be better defended. There was then no regular culture or colony in St. Lucia. It was only frequented by the inhabitants of Martinico, who came thither to cut wood, and to build canoes, and who had considerable docks on the island.

SOME soldiers and sailors having deserted thither after the peace of Utrecht, Marshal d'Estrees petitioned for a grant of the island. No sooner was it obtained in 1718, than he sent over a commandant, troops, cannon, and inhabitants. This gave umbrage to the court of London, which had a kind of claim to this island from prior settlement, as that of Versailles had from almost uninterrupted possession. Their complaints determined the French ministry, to order that things should be put into the same condition they were in before the grant. Whether this compliance did not appear sufficient to the English, or whether it gave them room to think they might attempt any thing, they themselves gave St. Lucia in 1722 to the duke

duke of Montagu, who was sent to take possession of it. This clashing of interests occasioned some disturbance between the two courts ; which was settled, however, by an agreement made in 1731, that, till the respective claims should be finally adjusted, the islands should be evacuated by both nations ; but that both should wood and water there.

THIS precarious agreement furnished an opportunity for private interest to exert itself. The English no longer molested the French in the enjoyment of their habitations ; but employed them as a channel to assist them in carrying on with richer colonies a smuggling trade, which the subjects of both governments thought equally advantageous to them. This trade has been more or less considerable till the treaty of 1763, which secured to France the long-contested property of St. Lucia.

Changes
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French.

THE first use which the court of Versailles proposed to make of her acquisition, was to establish a magazine there. It had been the general opinion for some years past, that the wood and cattle of North-America was absolutely necessary for these southern colonies. It was found inconvenient to carry them directly thither ; and St. Lucia was fixed upon as a very proper place for the exchange of these commodities against the molasses of Martinico and Guadalupe. Experience soon shewed that this scheme was impracticable.

IN order to effect this, the English must either deposit their cargoes in store-houses, or keep them on board, or sell them to traders settled on the island ; three things equally impossible.

THESE

THESE sailors will never consent to lose sight of their cattle, as the expences they would incur for having them taken care of, for their food, or to secure them from accidents, would infallibly ruin them. Neither will they pay for warehouses for their wood, which is too cheap and too bulky a commodity to be worth the charge of store-room. Nor can it be expected that they should quietly sit on board their ships, waiting till some traders should come from the French islands to deal with them: the nature of their trade will not admit of such delays. The only method left to transact this business, would be by means of traders who might settle on the island as brokers; but the profit they must necessarily make, would enhance the price of the merchandise so much, that it would be impossible to carry on the trade through their channel.

THE difficulties are not less on the side of the proprietors of molasses, than on that of the dealers in northern commodities. Accustomed to sell their spirit at thirty-five or thirty-six livres * a hoghead, they would never consent to an abatement of two-fifths, which must be allowed for carriage, emptying out, and commission. If the English are obliged to pay a higher price for the molasses, they must consequently raise that of their own commodities, and this advance will make them too dear for the consumer.

THE French ministry, undeceived as to their first notion, without entirely giving it up, have
turned

* About 11. 11s.

turned their thoughts to the cultivation of St. Lucia. In 1763, they sent over, at a great expence, and with unnecessary parade, seven or eight hundred men, whose unhappy fate is more a matter of pity than surprize. Under the tropics the best established colonies always destroy one third of the soldiers that are sent thither, though they are healthy stout men, and find good accommodations. It is not surprizing then, that a set of miserable wretches, the refuse of Europe, and exposed to all the hardships of indigence, and all the horrors of despair, should most of them perish in an uncultivated island.

THE advantage of peopling this colony was reserved to the neighbouring settlements. Some Frenchmen, who had sold, upon very profitable terms to themselves, their plantations at the Granades to the English, brought part of their capital to St. Lucia. Several planters from St. Vincents, incensed at being obliged to buy lands which they themselves had been at incredible pains to clear and fertilize, took the same step. Martinico also furnished some inhabitants, whose possessions were either not sufficiently fertile, or too much confined, and traders who devoted part of their stock to husbandry. Each of these has obtained the free grant of a spot of land proportioned to his abilities. Those whose means were small, have confined themselves to such labours as required no great advances. Those who were richer have ventured on greater undertakings.

THERE are already nine parishes on the colony, eight to leeward, and only one to windward. This preference given to one part of the island, is not for the sake of a better soil, but for the convenience of the shipping. In time, that part that was neglected at first, will likewise be inhabited, as there are bays continually discovered, in which canoes may put in, and receive all kinds of commodities on board.

A ROAD which goes all round the island, and two others that cross it from east to west, are very convenient for carrying the produce of the plantations to the landing places. In process of time, and with some expence, these roads will be brought to a much greater degree of perfection than it was possible they should be at first, without running into expences too burdensome for a settlement in its infant state. The labours of vassalage required for making these roads, have unavoidably retarded the culture of the lands, and excited great complaints, but the colonists now begin to bless the wise and steady hand that has ordered and conducted this work for their benefit.

ON the first of January, 1772, the number of white people in the island amounted to 2018 souls, men, women, and children; that of the blacks to 663 freemen, and 12,795 slaves. The cattle consisted of 928 mules or horses, 2070 head of horned cattle, and 3184 sheep or goats. There were thirty-eight sugar-plantations, which occupied 978 pieces of land; 5,395,889 coffee-trees; 1,321,600 cocoa plants; and 367 plots of

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cotton.

cotton. They were divided into seven hundred and six dwelling places. The present produce is four millions of livres *; a revenue which for some time must increase one eighth every year.

A GENERAL prejudice prevailed in these islands against St. Lucia. It was said, that nature had refused it every advantage necessary to form a colony of any importance. In the opinion of the public, its dry and stony soil could never pay the expence of manuring. The inclemency of the climate would infallibly destroy every man, who, from a strong desire of enriching himself, or who, driven by despair, should be bold enough to settle there. These notions were universally received.

SUCCESSFUL experience must at length undeceive the most prejudiced person. The soil of St. Lucia is not a bad one even by the sea side, and is better the further one advances in the country. The whole of the island may be cultivated with success, except some high and craggy mountains, which bear evident marks of old volcanos. In one deep valley there are still eight or ten ponds, the water of which boils up in a most dreadful manner, and retains some of its heat at the distance of six thousand toises from its reservoirs. There are not, indeed, many extensive plains on the island, but several small ones, where the growth of sugar may be carried to fifteen millions weight. The shape of the island, which is long and narrow, will make the carriage easy, wherever the canes are planted.

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THE air in the inland parts of St. Lucia is the same as it was in all the other islands before they were inhabited, foul and unwholesome at first; but less noxious as the woods are cleared, and the ground laid open. The air on some part of the sea-coast is more unhealthy. On the leeward side the lands receive some small rivers, which, springing from the foot of the mountains, have not a slope sufficient to wash down the sands with which the influx of the ocean choaks up their mouths. Stopped by this insurmountable barrier, they spread themselves into unwholesome morasses upon the neighbouring grounds. So obvious a reason had been sufficient to drive away the few Caribs who were found upon the island when it was first discovered. The French, driven into the new world by a more powerful motive than even self-preservation, have been less careful than the savages. It is in this very spot that they have chiefly fixed their plantations. They will sooner or later be punished for their blind rapaciousness, unless they erect dykes, and dig canals, to drain off the waters. The health they enjoy along the rivers, where the ships are careened, and those in which the rain waters are collected, which fall into deeper bays, seems to indicate that this expedient would succeed.

THE character and abilities of the Earl of Ennery, the founder of this colony, authorize us to affirm, that when this island, which is about forty-five leagues in circumference, has attained the degree of cultivation it is capable of, it may employ fifty thousand slaves, and carry on a trade to



the amount of ten millions * yearly. This period of prosperity cannot even be very distant, as the activity of the planters is released from those fetters which have retarded their progress every where else. Fifty men, appointed to maintain good order, are all the troops they have at St. Lucia. They pay no taxes, directly or indirectly. Ships of all nations are admitted into their roads, and pay nothing at coming in or going out. Every one is free to bring thither what merchandise he can sell at the cheapest rate, and to carry away such commodities as will procure the best price. Ever since Europe has acquired possessions in America, none has met with more indulgence. Such singular favour must undoubtedly have a period, and this island, like all the others, will one day be brought under the yoke of restrictive laws. But a few years peace and freedom will enable her to bear this burden.

Schemes
of France
to secure to
itself the
possession
of St. Lu-
cia.

BEFORE this burden is imposed, the mother country will take care to secure to herself the produce of an island which she has put into a flourishing condition. To keep possession of it, it will be sufficient to defend the Careenage harbour.

THIS famous harbour unites many advantages. It has good soundings every where, with an excellent bottom. Nature has provided it with three careening places, which make a wharf needless, and only require the capstern to heave the ship down on the shore. Thirty ships of the line might ride safely there, and be sheltered from the hurri-

cans,

canes, without the trouble of mooring. The boats of that country, which have lain there for a long while, have never been injured by the worms; it is not, however, expected that this advantage will continue, whatever may be the immediate cause of it. The winds are always favourable for sailing out; and the largest squadron would be cleared out in less than an hour.

So favourable a situation is capable of defending not only all the national possessions, but also of threatening those of the enemy throughout America. The naval forces of England cannot cover all parts. The smallest squadron sent out from St. Lucia, would in a few days invade those colonies, which, being least exposed, would think themselves quite secure. The only way to prevent this danger, would be to block up the Carenage; and even then, the purport of so expensive and tiresome a cruize might be defeated by a man who should be bold enough to undertake any enterprise that can be effected at sea.

THIS harbour, which is subject to the inconvenience of exposing every ship that comes within view to be taken, has never appeared worthy the attention of the British nation, though too powerful and too enlightened not to consider, that ships are to protect the roads, and not the roads the ships. With regard to France, this harbour affords the greatest maritime defence, a position that will not allow a ship under sail to enter. She must be warped for a considerable space before she can get into it. There is no plying to windward between

the two points. The soundings increasing suddenly near the land from twenty-five to a hundred fathom, will not permit the assailants to come to an anchor. Only one ship can come in at a time, and she would be exposed to the fire of three masked batteries in front and on both sides.

A SHIP that would attack the harbour would be under the necessity of landing at Shoque-bay, a shore a league long, which is only parted from the Careenage by the point called Vigie, which forms this bay. If the enemy were once masters of the Vigie, they would sink every ship in the harbour, or at least compel them to bring to, and that without any loss on their side; because this peninsula, though commanded by a citadel built on the other side of the harbour, would cover the assailants by its own back. It would only have occasion for mortars, and neither fire a single gun, nor endanger the life of one man.

If shutting up the entrance of the harbour against the enemy were sufficient, it would be needless to fortify the Vigie. The enemy might be kept out without this precaution; but the ships of the French must be protected. It is necessary that a small squadron should be able to set the English forces at defiance; compel them to block up the place; take advantage of their absence, or of some error they might fall into; all which cannot be effected without fortifying the top of the peninsula. It must be considered, that by thus multiplying the points of defence, a greater number of men will be wanted; but if there are
any

any ships in the harbour, their sailors and gunners may be employed in defending the Vigie, which they would do with the greater alacrity, as on this would depend the safety of the squadron. If there are no vessels in the harbour, the Vigie will be abandoned, or ill defended, and that for the following reason.

ON the other side of the harbour there is an eminence, called *Morné Fortuné*. The flat on the top offers one of those favourable situations that are seldom to be met with, for erecting a citadel, which would require almost as great a force to attack it, as the best fortified place in Europe. This fortification, the plan of which is already laid, and will certainly one day be carried into execution, will have the advantage of defending the Careenage bay on all sides, of commanding all the eminences that surround it, and of making it impossible for the enemy to enter; of securing the town which is to be built on the back of the mountain; in short, of hindering the assailants from penetrating into the island, even if they had actually landed at Shoque bay, and made themselves masters of the Vigie. Further discussions on the means of preserving St. Lucia must be left to the professors of the military art. Let us now fix the attention of the reader on Martinico.

THIS island is sixteen leagues in length, and forty-five in circumference, leaving out the capes, which sometimes extend two or three leagues into the sea. It is very uneven, and intersected in all parts by a number of hillocks, which are mostly of

The French settle at Martinico, upon the ruins of the Caribs.

a conical form. Three mountains rise above these smaller eminences. The highest bears the indelible marks of a volcano. The woods with which it is covered, continually attract the clouds, which occasions noxious damps, and contributes to make it horrid and inaccessible, while the two others are in most parts cultivated. From these mountains, but chiefly from the first, issue the many springs that water the island. These waters, which flow in gentle streams, are changed into torrents on the slightest storm. Their quality partakes of the nature of the soil they pass through; in some places they are excellent, in others so bad, that the inhabitants are obliged to drink the water they have collected in the rainy season.

DESNAMBUC, who had sent to reconnoitre Martinico, sailed from St. Christopher's in 1635, to settle his nation there; for he would not have it peopled from Europe. He foresaw that men, tired with the fatigue of a long voyage, would mostly perish soon after their arrival, either from the climate, or from the hardships incident to most emigrations. The sole founders of this new colony were a hundred men who had long lived in his government of St. Christopher's. They were brave, active, inured to labour and fatigues; skillful in tilling the ground and erecting habitations; abundantly provided with potatoe plants, and all necessary seeds.

THEY completed their first settlement without any difficulty. The natives, intimidated by the fire-arms, or seduced by the promises that were made

made them, gave up to the French the western and southern parts of the island, and retired to the other. This tranquillity was of short duration. The Caribs, when they saw these enterprising strangers daily increasing, were convinced that their ruin was inevitable, unless they could extirpate them; and they therefore called in the savages of the neighbouring islands to their assistance. They fell jointly upon a little fort that had been accidentally erected; but they met with such a warm reception, that they thought proper to retreat, leaving seven or eight hundred of their best warriors dead upon the spot. After this check they disappeared for a long while; and when they returned they brought with them presents, and expressed their concern for what had happened. They were received in a friendly manner; and the reconciliation was sealed with some pots of brandy that were given them to drink.

THE labours had been carried on with difficulty till this period. The fear of a surprise obliged the colonists of three different habitations to meet every night in that which was in the center, and which was always kept in a state of defence. There they slept secure, guarded by their dogs and a centinel. In the day time no one ventured out without his gun, and a brace of pistols at his girdle. These precautions were needless when the two nations came to be on friendly terms; but the one, whose friendship and favour had been courted, took such undue advantages of her superiority, to extend her usurpations, that she soon rekindled in the

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the others a hatred that had never entirely subsided. The savages, whose manner of life requires a vast extent of land, finding themselves daily more straitened, had recourse to stratagem to weaken an enemy whom they dared not attack by force. They separated into small bands, way-layed the French, who frequented the woods, waited till the sportsman had fired his piece, and, before he had time to load it again, rushed upon him and destroyed him. Twenty men had been thus destroyed, before any one was able to account for their disappearance. As soon as this particular was discovered, the aggressors were pursued and beaten, their carbets burnt, their wives and children massacred, and those few, that escaped the carnage, fled from Martinico, and never appeared there again.

THE French, by this retreat, now become sole masters of the island, live quietly upon those spots which best suited their plantations. They were then divided into two classes. The first consisted of such as had paid their passage to America; and these were called inhabitants. The government distributed lands to them, which became their absolute property upon paying a yearly tribute. They were obliged to keep watch by turns, and to contribute in proportion to their abilities towards the necessary expences for the public welfare and safety. These had under their command a multitude of disorderly people brought over from Europe at their expence, whom they called, *engagés*, or bondsmen. This engagement was a kind of

slavery for the term of three years. When that time was expired, the bondsmen, by recovering their liberty, became the equals of those whom they had served.

THEY all confined themselves at first to the cultivation of tobacco and cotton ; to which was soon added that of the arnotto and indigo. That of sugar was not begun till about the year 1650. Benjamin Dacosta, one of those Jews who are beholden for their industry to that very oppression which their nation is now fallen under, after having exercised it upon others, planted some cocoa trees ten years after. His example was not followed till 1684, when the chocolate grew more common in France. Cocoa then became the principal dependence of the colonists who had not a sufficient fund to undertake sugar plantations. One of those calamities which arise from the seasons, and which sometimes affect men, and sometimes vegetables, destroyed all the cocoa trees in 1718. This spread a general consternation among the inhabitants of Martinico. The coffee-tree was then proposed to them, as a plank is held out to mariners after a shipwreck.

THE French ministry had received, as a present from the Dutch, two of these trees, which were carefully preserved in the King's botanical garden. Two shoots were taken from these. Mr. Desclieux, who was intrusted to carry them over to Martinico, happened to be on board a ship which wanted water. He shared with his young trees the portion that was allotted him for his own drinking ;
and

and by this generous sacrifice saved the valuable trust that had been put into his hands. His magnanimity was rewarded. The culture of coffee was attended with the greatest and most rapid success; and this virtuous patriot still enjoys, with a pleasing satisfaction, the uncommon felicity of having as it were saved an important colony, and enriched it with a fresh branch of industry.

INDEPENDENT of this resource, Martinico was possessed of those natural advantages which seemed to promise a speedy and great prosperity. Of all the French settlements, it is the most happily situated with regard to the winds that prevail in those seas. Its harbours possess the inestimable advantage of affording a certain shelter from the hurricanes which annoy these latitudes. Its situation having made it the seat of government, it has obtained the greatest marks of favour, and enjoyed the ablest and most upright administration of them all. The enemy has constantly respected the valour of its inhabitants, and has seldom attacked it without having cause to repent. Its domestic peace has never been disturbed, not even in 1717, when, urged by a general discontent, the inhabitants ventured, boldly indeed, but prudently, to send back to France a Governor and an Intendant; who oppressed the people under their despotism and rapaciousness. The order, tranquillity, and harmony, which they found means to preserve in those times of anarchy, were a proof that they were influenced rather by their aversion from tyranny, than by their impatience

tience of authority ; and served in some measure to justify to the mother-country, a step, which in itself might be considered as irregular, and contrary to the established principles.

Notwithstanding all these advantages, Martinico, though in greater forwardness than the other French colonies, had made but little progress at the end of the last century. In 1700, it contained but 6597 white men in all. The savages, mulattoes, and free negroes, men, women and children, amounted to no more than 507. The number of slaves was but 14,566. All these together made a population of 21,640 persons. The whole of the cattle was 3,668 horses or mules, and 9,217 head of horned cattle. They grew a great quantity of cocoa, tobacco and cotton, and had nine indigo houses, and one hundred and eighty three small sugar plantations.

On the cessation of the long and obstinate wars, which had ravaged all the continents, and been carried on upon all the seas of the world, and when France had relinquished her projects of conquest, and those principles of administration by which she had been so long misled ; Martinico emerged from that feeble state in which all these calamities had kept her, and soon rose to a great degree of prosperity. She became the mart for all the windward national settlements. It was in her ports that the neighbouring islands sold their produce, and bought the commodities of the mother-country. The French navigators loaded and unloaded their ships no where else. Martinico was famous

Prosperity
of Marti-
nico.
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famous all over Europe. She was the object of speculation considered under the different views of a planter, an agent to the other colonies, and a trader with Spanish and North-America.

As a planter, she possessed, in 1736, 447 sugar-works; 11,953,232 coffee-trees; 193,870 of cocoa; 2,068,480 of cotton; 39,400 of tobacco; 6,750 of arnotto. Her supplies for provision consisted of 4,806,142 banana trees; 34,483,000 trenches of cassava; and 247 plots of potatoes and yams. She had a population of 72,000 blacks, men, women and children. Their labour had improved her plantations as far as was consistent with the consumption then made in Europe of American productions; and she exported annually to the amount of sixteen millions of livres*.

THE connections of Martinico with the other islands intitled her to the profits of commission and the charges of transport, as she alone was in possession of carriages. This profit might be rated at the tenth of the produce; and the sum total must amount to 17 or 18 millions of livres†. This standing debt, seldom called in, was left them for the improvement of their plantations. It was increased by advances in money, slaves, and other necessary articles. Martinico thus becoming more and more a creditor to the other islands, kept them in constant dependence, but without injuring them. They all enriched themselves by her assistance, and their profit was beneficial to her.

HER

* 700,000l.

† On an average about 765,600l.

HER connections with Cape Breton, with Canada, and with Louisiana, procured her a market for her ordinary sugars, her inferior coffee, her molasses, and rum, which would not sell in France. They gave her, in exchange, salt-fish, dried vegetables, deals, and some flour. In her clandestine trade on the coasts of Spanish America, consisting wholly of goods manufactured by the nation, she was well paid for the risques which the French merchants did not chuse to run. This traffic, less important than the former as to its object, was much more lucrative in its effects. It commonly brought in a profit of ninety *per cent.* upon the value of four millions of livres *, yearly sent to the Caraccas, or the neighbouring colonies.

So many prosperous engagements had brought immense sums into Martinico. Eighteen millions of livres † were constantly circulated there with amazing rapidity. This is, perhaps, the only country in the world where the specie has been so considerable, as to make it a matter of indifference to them whether they dealt in gold, or silver, or in commodities.

HER extensive trade annually brought into her ports two hundred ships from France, fourteen or fifteen fitted out by the mother country for the coast of Guinea, sixty from Canada, ten or twelve from the islands of Margareta and Trinidad; besides the English and Dutch ships that came to carry on a smuggling trade. The private navigation from the island to the northern colonies, to the Spanish

* 175,000l. † 787,500l.

Spanish continent, and to the windward islands, employed a hundred and thirty vessels from twenty to seventy tons burthen, manned with six hundred European sailors of all nations, and fifteen hundred slaves long-inured to the sea-service.

At first, the ships that frequented Martinico used to land in those parts where the plantations lay. This practice, seemingly the most natural, was liable to great inconveniences. The north and north-easterly winds which blow upon part of the coasts, keep the sea in a constant and violent agitation. Though there are many good roads, they are either at a considerable distance from each other, or from most of the habitations. The sloops destined to coast along this interval, were frequently forced by the weather to anchor, or to take in but half their lading. These difficulties retarded the loading and unloading of the ship; and the consequence of these delays was, a great loss of men, and an increase of expence to the buyer and seller.

COMMERCE, which must always reckon among its greatest advantages, that of procuring a quick return, could not but be impeded by another inconvenience, which was the necessity the trader lay under, even in the best latitudes, of disposing of his cargo in small parcels. If some industrious man undertook to save him that trouble, this enhanced the price of the goods to the colonists. The merchant's profit is to be rated in proportion to the quantity he sells. The more he sells, the more is he able to abate of the profit which another must make who sells less.

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A greater inconvenience than either of these was, that some places were overstocked with some sorts of European goods, while others were in want of them. The owners of the ships were equally at a loss to take in a proper lading. Most places did not afford all sorts of commodities, nor every species of the same commodity. This deficiency obliged them to touch at several places, or to carry away too great or too small a quantity of what was fit for the port where they were to unload.

THE ships themselves were exposed to several difficulties. Many of them wanted careening, and most required at least some repair. The proper assistance on these occasions was not to be found in the roads that were but little frequented, where workmen did not chuse to settle, for fear of not getting sufficient employment. They were therefore obliged to go and refit in some particular harbours, and then return to take in their lading at the place where they had made their sale. These different expeditions took up at least three or four months.

THESE and many more inconveniences made it very desirable to some of the inhabitants, and to all the navigators, to establish a magazine, where the colonies and the mother-country might send their respective matters of exchange. Nature seemed to point out Fort Royal as a fit place for this purpose. Its harbour was one of the best in all the windward islands, and so celebrated for its safety, that, when it was open to the Dutch vessels, they had orders from the republic to

shelter there in June, July and August, from the hurricanes which are so frequent and so violent in those latitudes. The lands of the Lamentin are distant but a league, and are the most fertile and richest of all the colony. The numerous rivers which water this fruitful country, convey loaded canoes to a certain distance from the place where they empty into the sea. The protection of the fortifications secured the peaceable enjoyment of so many advantages ; which, however, were balanced by a swampy and unwholesome soil. This capital of Mart nico was also the asylum of the men of war ; which branch of the navy has always oppressed the merchant-men. On this account, Fort Royal was an improper place to become the center of trade, which was therefore turned to St. Peter's.

THIS little town, which, notwithstanding the fires that have reduced it four times to ashes, still contains 1748 houses, is situated on the western coast of the island, in a bay or inlet which is almost circular. One part of it is built on the strand along the sea-side ; which is called the anchorage ; and is the place destined for the ships and warehouses. The other part of the town stands upon a low hill : it is called the Fort, from a small fortification that was built there in 1665, to check the seditions of the inhabitants against the tyranny of monopoly ; but it now serves to protect the road from foreign enemies. These two parts of the town are separated by a rivulet or fordable river.

THE anchorage is at the back of a pretty high and perpendicular hill. Shut up as it were by this hill, which intercepts the easterly winds, the most constant and most salubrious in these parts; exposed without any refreshing breezes to the scorching beams of the sun, reflected from the hill, from the sea, and the black sand on the beach; this place is extremely hot, and always unwholesome. Besides, there is no harbour; and the ships, which cannot winter safely upon this coast, are obliged to take shelter at Fort Royal. But these disadvantages are compensated by the conveniency of the road of St. Peter's, for loading and unloading of goods; and by its situation, which is such, that ships can freely go in and out at all times, and with all winds.

THIS village was the first that was built, peopled, and cultivated on the island. It is, however, not so much on account of its antiquity as of its convenience, that it is become the center of communication between the colony and the mother country. At first, St. Peter's was the storehouse for the commodities of some districts, which lay along such dreary and tempestuous coasts, that no ship could ever get at them; so that the inhabitants could carry on no trade without removing elsewhere. The agents for these colonists in those early times, were only the masters of small vessels, who having made themselves known by continually sailing about the island, were enticed by the prospect of gain, to fix upon a settled place for their residence. Honesty was the only support of this

intercourse: most of these agents could not read. None of them kept any books or journals. They had a trunk, in which they kept a separate bag for each person, whose business they transacted. Into this bag they put the produce of the sales, and took out what money they wanted for the purchases. When the bag was empty, the commission was at an end. This confidence, which must appear fabulous in our days of degeneracy and dishonesty, was yet common at the beginning of this century. There are some persons still living, who have carried on this trade, where the employer had no other security for the fidelity of his agent, but the benefit resulting from it.

THESE plain men were successively replaced by more enlightened persons from Europe. Some had gone over to the colony, when it was taken out of the hands of the exclusive companies. Their number increased as the commodities multiplied; and they themselves contributed greatly to the extending of the plantations by the loans they advanced to the planters; whose labours had, till then, gone on but slowly for want of such help. This conduct made them the necessary agents for their debtors in the colony, as they were already for their employers at home. Even the colonist, who owed them nothing, was in some measure dependent on them, as he might possibly hereafter stand in need of their assistance. If his crop should fail, or be retarded, a plantation of sugar-canes be set on fire, or a mill blown down: if his buildings should fall, mortality carry off his cattle or his
slaves;

slaves; or that every thing should be destroyed by drought or heavy rains; where could he find the means of supporting himself during these calamities, or of repairing the loss occasioned by them? These means are in twenty different hands. If only one refuses his assistance, the distress must necessarily increase. These considerations induced such as had not yet borrowed money, to trust the agents of St. Peter's with their concerns, in order to secure a resource in times of distress.

THE few rich inhabitants, whose fortunes seemed to place them above these wants, were in some degree compelled to apply to this factory. The trading captains, finding a port where they might with advantage complete their business, without stirring out of their warehouses, or even of their ships, forsook Fort Royal, Trinity Fort, and all the other places where an arbitrary price was put upon the commodities, and where the payments were slow and uncertain. By this revolution, the colonists, being confined to their works, which require a constant and daily attendance, could no longer go out to dispose of their produce. They were therefore obliged to intrust it to able men, who, being settled at the only frequented sea-port, were ready to seize the most favourable opportunities for buying and selling; an inestimable advantage this, in a country where trade is continually fluctuating. Guadalupe and Granada followed this example, induced by the same motives.

THE war of 1744 put a stop to this prosperity; not that the fault was in Martinico itself. Its navy, constantly exercised, and accustomed to frequent engagements, which the carrying on of a contraband trade required, was prepared for action. In less than six months, forty privateers, fitted out at St. Peter's, spread themselves about the latitudes of the Carribee islands. They signalised themselves in a manner worthy of the ancient freebooters. They were constantly returning in triumph, and laden with an immense booty. Yet, in the midst of these successes, an entire stop was put to the navigation of the colony, both to the Spanish coast and to Canada, and they were constantly disturbed even on their own coasts. The few ships that came from France, in order to compensate the hazards they were exposed to by the loss of their commodities, sold them at a very advanced price, and bought them at a very low one. By this means the produce decreased in value, the lands were but ill cultivated, the works neglected, and the slaves perishing for want. Every thing was in a declining state, and tending to decay. The peace at last restored the freedom of trade, and with it the hopes of recovering the ancient prosperity of the island. The event did not answer the pains that were taken to attain it.

Decay of
Martinico,
and the
cause of it.

Two years had not yet elapsed since the cessation of hostilities, when the colony lost the contraband trade she carried on with the American Spaniards. This revolution was not owing to the vigilance of the

the guarda-costas. As it is more the interest of the traders to set them at defiance, than theirs to defend themselves; the former are apt to despise men who are ill paid to protect such rights, or enforce such prohibitions as are oftentimes unjust. The substitution of register ships to the fleets was the cause that confined the attempts of the smugglers within very narrow limits. In the new system, the number of ships was undetermined, and the time of their arrival uncertain, which occasioned a variation in the price of commodities unknown before. From that time the smuggler, who only engaged in this trade from the certainty of a fixed and constant profit, would no longer pursue it, when it did not secure him an equivalent to the risks he ran.

BUT this loss was not so sensibly felt by the colony, as the hardships brought upon them by the mother country. An unskilful administration clogged the reciprocal and necessary connection between the islands and North America with so many formalities, that in 1755 Martinico sent but four vessels to Canada. The direction of the colonies, now committed to the care of avaricious and ignorant clerks, soon lost its importance, sunk into contempt, and was prostituted to venality.

BUT the trade of France was not yet affected by the decay of Martinico. The French found traders in the road of St. Peter's, who purchased their cargoes at a good price, and sent their ships home with expedition and richly laden; and they never inquired from what particular colony the consumptions and produce arose. Even the negroes who
were

were carried there we sold at a high price; but few remained there. The greatest part were sent to the Granades, to Guadalupe, and even to the Neutral islands, which, notwithstanding the unlimited freedom they enjoyed, preferred the slaves brought by the French, to those the English offered, though apparently on better terms. They were convinced, from long experience, that the chosen negroes, who cost the most, enriched their lands, while the plantations did not flourish in the hands of the negroes bought at a lower price. But these profits of the mother country were foreign and rather hurtful to Martinico.

SHE had not yet repaired her losses during the peace, nor paid off the debts which a series of calamities had obliged her to contract; when war, the greatest of all evils, broke out afresh. A series of misfortunes for France, after repeated defeats and losses, made Martinico fall into the hands of the English. It was restored in July 1763, sixteen months after it had been conquered; but deprived of all the necessary means of prosperity, that had made it of so much importance. For some years past, the contraband trade carried on to the Spanish coasts was almost entirely lost. The cession of Canada had precluded all hopes of opening again a communication, which had only been interrupted by temporary mistakes. The productions of the Granades, St. Vincent, and Dominica, which were now become British dominions, could no longer be brought into their harbours; and a new regulation of the mother country, which forbade her

having any intercourse with Guadalupe, left her no hopes from that quarter.

BOOK
XIII.

Present
state of
Martinico.

THE colony thus deprived of every thing, as it were, and destitute, nevertheless contained, at the last survey, which was taken on the first of January, 1770, in the compass of twenty-eight parishes, 12,450 white people of all ages and of both sexes; 1814 free blacks or mulattos; 70,553 slaves; and 443 fugitive negroes. The number of births in 1766, was in the proportion of one in thirty among the white people, and of one in twenty-five among the blacks. From this observation, if it were constant, it should seem that the climate of America is much more favourable to the propagation of the Africans than of the Europeans; since the former multiply still more in the labours and hardships of slavery, than the latter in the midst of plenty and freedom. The consequence must be, that in process of time the increase of blacks in America will surpass that of the white men; and, perhaps, at last avenge this race of victims on the descendents of the oppressors.

THE cattle of the colony consists of 8283 horses or mules; 12,376 head of horned cattle; 975 hogs; and 13,544 sheep or goats.

THEIR provisions are, 17,930,596 trenches of cassava; 3,509,048 banana trees; and 406 squares and a half of yams and potatoes.

THEIR plantations contain 11,444 squares of land, planted with sugar; 6,638,757 coffee-trees; 871,043 cocoa-trees; 1,764,807 cotton plants; 59,966 trees of cassia, and sixty-one of arnotto.

HER

HER meadows or savannahs take up 10,072 squares of land; there are 11,966 in wood; and 8448 uncultivated or forsaken.

THE plantations which produce coffee, cotton, cocoa, and other things of less importance, are 1515 in number. There are but 286 for sugar. They employ 116 water-mills, twelve wind-mills, and 184 turned by oxen. Before the hurricane of the 13th of August, 1766, there were 302 small habitations, and fifteen sugar-works more.

IN 1769 France imported from Martinico, upon two hundred and two trading vessels, 177,116 quintals of fine sugar, and 12,579 quintals of raw sugar; 68,518 quintals of coffee; 11,731 quintals of cocoa; 6,048 quintals of cotton; 2,518 quintals of cassia; 783 casks of rum; 307 hogheads of molasses; 150 pounds of indigo; 2147 pounds of preserved fruits; forty-seven pounds of chocolate; 282 pounds of rasped tobacco; 494 pounds of rope-yarn; 234 chests of liqueurs; 234 hogheads of molasses; &c. 451 quintals of wood for dying; and 12,108 hides in the hair. All these productions together have been bought in the colony itself, for 12,265,862 livres fourteen sols *. It is true, that the colony has received from the mother country to the amount of 13,449,436 livres † of merchandise; but part of this has been sent away to the Spanish coasts, and another part has been conveyed to the English settlements.

ALL those who from instinct or duty are concerned for the interest of their country, cannot see, without regret, that so excellent a colony as
Martinico

* 536,631l. 9s. 10d. † 588,412l. 16s. 6d.

Martinico should furnish so small a quantity of commodities, part of which even is brought from other places. It is well known, indeed, that the center of the island, full of horrid rocks, is unfit for the culture of sugar, coffee, or cotton; that too much moisture would be hurtful to these productions; and that, should they succeed, the charges of carriage across mountains and precipices would absorb the profits of the crops. But in this large space meadows would turn to very good account. The soil is excellent for pasture, and only wants the attention of government to furnish the inhabitants with the necessary increase of cattle both for labour and food. There are other spots on the island where the soil is ungrateful. Some are alternately spoilt by drought and rain, some are marshy, and almost always overflowed by the sea. There are others where nothing will grow, except those aquatic plants known by the general name of mangroves, but of various species, and very unlike each other. In other parts, the ground is so stony, that it cannot be improved by labour, or so much exhausted, that it is not worth manuring.

To these inconveniences, which arise from the nature of things, must be added a terrible plague it has experienced from the ants; a species of insects formerly unknown in America. Some time ago they ravaged Barbadoes in so terrible a manner, that it was a matter of deliberation, whether that island, formerly so flourishing, should not be evacuated. This calamity had greatly diminished there, when in 1763 it began to be felt at Martinico. The mischief these insects have done to several
parts

parts of the colony cannot be described. All the useful vegetables have been destroyed; the quadrupeds have been unable to subsist there; the largest trees have been infested in such a manner, that even the least delicate birds would not fix upon them. It was not without the greatest precautions that the children were preserved from being devoured, that the women could be supported till they lay in, or that the men could subsist. It was apprehended that this numberless and devouring race would spread all over Martinico. Happily this formidable ravage has been stopped in its beginning, and seems very sensibly to be totally going off; but the lands infested with this poison, yield only to the cultivation of coffee, and will not produce sugar.

PREVIOUS to this evil, those observers who were best acquainted with the colony, were generally of opinion, that its plantations were susceptible of improvement, and might be increased about one fourth part. Its present situation is far from encouraging such flattering hopes.

Whether
the state of
Martinico
can be im-
proved?

THE proprietors of the lands on the island may be divided into four classes. The first are possessed of a hundred large sugar plantations, in which twelve thousand negroes are employed. The second have one hundred and fifty, worked by nine thousand blacks. The third class possess thirty, with two thousand blacks. The fourth, devoted to the culture of coffee, cotton, cocoa, and cassava, may employ twelve thousand negroes. The remaining slaves of both sexes are engaged in domestic services, in fishing, or in navigation.

THE first class consists entirely of rich people. Their culture is carried to the highest degree of perfection, and they are able to preserve it in the flourishing state to which they have brought it. Even the expences they must be at for replacing deficiencies, are not so great as those of the less wealthy planter, as the slaves born upon these plantations supply the place of those destroyed by time and labour.

THE second class, which is that of planters in easy circumstances, have but half the hands that would be necessary to acquire a fortune equal to that of the opulent proprietors. If they were even able to buy the number of slaves they want, they would be deterred from it by fatal experience. Nothing can be more imprudent than the custom of putting a great number of fresh negroes upon a plantation. The sickness those miserable wretches are liable to, from a change of climate and diet; the trouble of inuring them to a kind of labour to which they are not accustomed, and which they dislike, cannot but disgust a planter, from the constant and laborious attention he must pay to this training up of men for the cultivation of land. The most active proprietor is he who is able to increase his works by one sixth of the number of slaves every year. Thus the second class might acquire fifteen hundred slaves yearly, if the net produce of their lands would admit of it. But they must not expect to meet with credit. The merchants in France do not seem disposed to trust them ;

them; and those who circulated their stock in the colony, no sooner found that they could not make use of it without running considerable risques, but they removed it to Europe, or to St. Domingo.

THE third class, which are but little removed from indigence, cannot change their situation by any means which the natural course of trade can supply. It is a matter of difficulty for them to be able to subsist. The indulgence of government can alone put them into such a flourishing condition as to render them useful to the state, by lending them, without interest, the sums they may want, to raise their plantations. This class might employ a greater number of fresh negroes than we have allotted to the second without the same inconveniences; because each planter having fewer slaves to look after, will be able to pay a greater attention to those he may purchase.

THE fourth class, who are employed in cultivations of less importance than that of sugar, do not stand in need of such powerful helps, to recover that ease and plenty from which they are fallen, by war, hurricanes, and other misfortunes. Could these two last classes but make an acquisition of fifteen hundred slaves every year, it would be sufficient to raise them to that degree of prosperity to which their industry naturally intitles them.

THUS Martinico might hope to revive her declining plantations, and to recover the first splendour to which her diligence had raised her, if she could get a yearly accession of three thousand negroes. But it is well known that she is not in a condition to pay for these recruits. She owes the

mother country, for balance of trade, about a million *. A series of misfortunes has obliged her to borrow four millions † of the merchants settled in the town of St. Peter. The engagements she has entered into on account of divided inheritances, and those she has contracted for the purchase of a number of plantations, have made her insolvent. This desperate state will neither allow her the means of soon recovering her former situation, nor the ambition of pursuing that road to fortune which once lay open to her.

ADD to this, that she stands exposed to invasion. But though there are a number of places where the enemy may land, yet they will never make the attempt. It would indeed be fruitless, because of the impossibility of bringing up the artillery and ammunition, across such a rugged country to Fort Royal, which defends the whole colony. It is in this latitude only that the enemy would fail in order to make such an attempt.

Whether
Martinico
can be con-
quered.

IN the front of this strong and principal place of defence is a famous harbour, situated on the side of a broad bay, that cannot be entered without many tackings, which must decide the fate of any ship that is forced to avoid an engagement. If she happens to be unrigged, or is a bad sailor, or meets with some accident from the variations of the squalls of wind, the currents, or whirlpools, she will fall into the hands of an assailant that is a better sailor. The garrison of the fortress itself may become a useless
and

* 43,750l.

† 175,000l.

and inglorious spectator of the defeat of a whole Squadron, as it has been often of the taking of merchant ships.

THE inside of the harbour is much injured on account of the hulks of several ships that have been sunk there, to keep out the English in the last war. These vessels have been taken up again; but it will still require a considerable expence to remove the heaps of sand which had gathered about them, and to put the harbour in the same state it was before. This work will not admit of any delay; for the port, though not very spacious, is the only one where ships of all rates can winter; the only one where they can be supplied with masts, sails, cables, and excellent water, which is brought there from the distance of a league by a very well-contrived canal, and which may be easily procured.

AN enemy will always land near to this harbour, and there is no possibility of preventing them, whatever precautions are taken. The war could only be carried on against them in the field; it could not be continued for any time, and the people would soon be reduced to shut themselves up in their fortifications.

THEY formerly had no other fortification than Fort Royal, where immense sums had been buried through want of skill under a ridge of mountains. All the knowledge of the ablest engineers has never been sufficient to give any degree of strength or solidity to works erected by chance, by the most unskillful hands, and without any sort of plan.

They

They have been obliged to content themselves with adding a covered way, a rampart and flanks, to such parts of the place as would admit of them. But the work of the most consequence has been to cut into the rock, which easily gives way; and to dig subterraneous rooms, which are airy, wholesome, and fit to secure warlike stores and provisions; as also to shelter the sick, and to defend the soldiers, and such of the inhabitants whose attachment to their country would inspire them with courage to defend the colony. It has been thought, that men who were sure of finding a safe retreat in these caverns, after having exposed their lives on the ramparts, would soon forget their fatigues, and face the enemy with fresh vigour. This idea was fortunate and sensible, and must have been suggested, if not by a patriotic government, at least by some sensible and humane minister.

BUT the bravery this must inspire could not be sufficient to preserve a place which is commanded on all sides. It was therefore thought adviseable to fix upon some more advantageous situation; and the point called *Morne Garnier* was chosen for this purpose, which is higher by thirty-five or forty feet than the highest tops of Patate, Tortenson, and Cartouche, all which overlook Fort Royal.

UPON this eminence a citadel has been raised, consisting of four bastions. The bastions in front, the covered way, the reservoirs for water, the powder magazines; all these means of defence are

ready, and the rest will soon be finished. The cazernes, and other necessary buildings, will soon complete the work. If even the redoubts and the batteries, intended to force the enemy to make their descent at a greater distance than Casco bay, where they landed at the last invasion, should not be attended with the effect that is expected from them; yet still the colony would be able to resist about three months. Fifteen hundred men will defend the *Morne Garnier* for thirty or six and thirty days against an army of fifteen thousand; and twelve hundred men will sustain themselves for twenty or five and twenty days in Fort Royal, which cannot be attacked till *Garnier* has been taken. This is all that can be expected from an expence of seven or eight millions of livres*.

THOSE, who are of opinion that the navy alone ought to protect the colonies, think that so considerable an expence has been misapplied. As it was not possible, in their opinion, to erect fortifications and to build ships at the same time; the preference ought to have been given to the latter, as being indispensably necessary. Especially if the impetuosity in the character of the French disposes them to attack rather than to defend, they ought sooner to destroy than erect fortresses; or none but ships should be built, those moveable ramparts which carry war with them, instead of waiting for it. Any power that aims at trade, and the establishment of colonies, must have ships, which bring
in

* About 328,000*l.* on an average.

in men and wealth, and increase population and circulation ; whereas bastions and soldiers are only fit to consume men and provisions. All that the court of Versailles can expect from the expence she has incurred at Martinico, is, that if the island should be attacked by the only enemy she has to fear, there will be time enough to relieve her. The English proceed slowly in a siege ; they always go on by rule, and nothing diverts them from completing any works that concern the safety of the assailants ; for they esteem the life of a soldier of more consequence than the loss of time. This maxim, so sensible in itself, is, perhaps, misapplied in the destructive climate of America ; but it is the maxim of a people, whose soldiers are engaged in the service of the state, not mercenaries paid by the prince. But whatever be the future fate of Martinico, it is now time to inquire into the present state of Guadalupe.

THIS island, which is of an irregular form, may be about eighty leagues in circumference. It is divided in two parts by a small arm of the sea, which is not above two leagues long, and from fifteen to forty fathom broad. This canal, known by the name of the salt river, is navigable, but will only carry vessels of fifty tons burthen.

Calamities
experienced
by the
French
who first
settled at
Guada-
lupe.

THAT part of the island which gives its name to the whole colony, is, towards the center, full of craggy rocks, and so cold that nothing will grow there but fern, and some useless shrubs covered with moss. On the top of these rocks, a mountain called *la Souphriere*, or the Brimstone moun-



tain, rises to an immense height into the middle region of the air. It exhales, through various openings, a thick black smoke, intermixed with sparks that are visible by night. From all these hills flow numberless springs, which fertilize the plains below, and moderate the burning heat of the climate by a refreshing stream, so celebrated, that the galleons which formerly used to touch at the windward islands, had orders to renew their provision with this pure and salubrious water. Such is that part of the island properly called Guadalupe. That which is commonly called Grand Terre, has not been so much favoured by nature. It is, indeed, less rugged; but it wants springs and rivers. The soil is not so fertile, or the climate so wholesome or so pleasant.

No European nation had yet taken possession of this island, when five hundred and fifty Frenchmen, led on by two gentlemen named Loline and Dupleffis, arrived there from Dieppe on the 28th of June, 1635. They had been very imprudent in their preparations. Their provisions were so ill chosen, that they were spoilt in the passage; and they had shipped so few, that they were exhausted in two months. They were supplied with none from the mother-country. St. Christopher's, whether from scarcity or design, refused to spare them any; and the first attempts in husbandry they made in the country, could not as yet afford any thing. No resource was left for the colony but from the savages; but the superfluities of a people, who cultivate but little, and therefore had never

laid

laid up any stores, could not be very considerable. The new comers, not content with what the savages might freely and voluntarily bring, came to a resolution to plunder them; and hostilities commenced on the 16th of January, 1636.

THE Caribs, not thinking themselves in a condition openly to resist an enemy who had so much the advantage from the superiority of their arms, destroyed their own provisions and plantations, and retired to Grand Terre, or to the neighbouring islands. From thence the most desperate came over to the island from which they had been driven, and concealed themselves in the thickest parts of the forests. In the day-time they shot with their poisoned arrows, or knocked down with their clubs, all the French who were scattered about for hunting or fishing. In the night, they burned the houses and destroyed the plantations of their unjust spoilers.

A dreadful famine was the consequence of this kind of war. The colonists were reduced to graze in the fields, to eat their own excrements, and to dig up dead bodies for their subsistence. Many who had been slaves at Algiers, held in abhorrence the hands that had broken their fetters; and all of them cursed their existence. It was in this manner that they atoned for the crime of their invasion, till the government of Aubert brought about a peace with the savages at the end of the year 1640. When we consider the injustice of the hostilities which the Europeans have committed all over America, we are almost tempted



to rejoice at their misfortunes, and at all the judgments that pursue those inhuman oppressors. We are ready, from motives of humanity, to renounce the ties that bind us to the inhabitants of our own hemisphere, change our connections, and contract beyond the seas with the savage Indians an alliance which unites all mankind, that of misfortune and compassion.

THE remembrance, however, of hardships endured in an invaded island, proved a powerful incitement to the cultivation of all articles of immediate necessity ; which afterwards induced an attention to those of luxury consumed in the mother-country. The few inhabitants who had escaped the calamities they had drawn upon themselves, were soon joined by some discontented colonists from St. Christopher's, by Europeans fond of novelty, by sailors tired of navigation, and by some sea-captains, who prudently chose to commit to the care of a grateful soil the treasures they had saved from the dangers of the sea. But still the prosperity of Guadalupe was stopped, or impeded by obstacles arising from its situation.

The colony of Guadalupe makes no great progress.

THE facility with which the pirates from the neighbouring islands could carry off their cattle, their slaves, their very crops, frequently brought them into a very desperate situation. Intestine broils, arising from jealousies of authority, often disturbed the quiet of the planters. The adventurers who went over to the windward islands, disdaining a land that was fitter for agriculture than for naval expeditions, were easily drawn to Mar-

tinico,

tinico, by the convenient roads it abounds with. The protection of those intrepid pirates, brought to that island all the traders who flattered themselves that they might buy up the spoils of the enemy at a low price, and all the planters who thought they might safely give themselves up to peaceful labours. This quick population could not fail of introducing the civil and military government of the Caribbee islands into Martinico. From that time, the French ministry attended more seriously to this than to the other colonies, which were not so immediately under their direction ; and, hearing chiefly of this island, they turned all their encouragements that way.

It was in consequence of this preference, that in 1700 the number of inhabitants in Guadalupe amounted only to 3,825 white people ; 325 savages, free negroes, mulattoes ; and 6,725 slaves, many of whom were Caribs. Her cultures were reduced to 60 small plantations of sugar, 66 of indigo, a little cocoa, and a considerable quantity of cotton. The cattle amounted to 1,620 horses and mules, and 3,699 head of horned cattle. This was the fruit of sixty years labour. But her future progress was as rapid as her first attempts had been slow.

At the end of the year 1755, the colony was peopled with 9,643 whites, 41,140 slaves of all ages and of both sexes. Her saleable commodities were the produce of 334 sugar plantations ; 15 plots of indigo ; 46,840 stems of cocoa ; 11,700
of

of tobacco; 2,257,725 of coffee; 12,748,447 of cotton. For her provision she had 29 squares of rice or maize, and 1,219 of potatoes or yams; 2,028,520 banana trees; and 32,577,950 trenches of cassava. These details are the most essential parts of the history of America, so far as it concerns Europe. Cato the Cenfor would have recorded them; and Charlemagne would have read them. Who then can be ashamed to attend to them? Let us therefore pursue these useful disquisitions. The cattle of Guadalupe consisted of 4,946 horses; 2,924 mules; 125 asses; 13,716 head of horned cattle; 11,162 sheep or goats; and 2,444 hogs. Such was the state of Guadalupe when it was conquered by the English in the month of April 1759.

FRANCE lamented this loss; but the colony had reason to comfort themselves for this disgrace. During a siege of three months, they had seen their plantations destroyed, the buildings that served to carry on their works burnt down, and some of their slaves carried off. Had the enemy been forced to retreat after all these devastations, the island was ruined. Deprived of all assistance from the mother-country, which was not able to send her any succours, and expecting nothing from the Dutch, who on account of their neutrality came into her roads, because she had nothing to offer them in exchange, she could never have subsisted till the ensuing harvest.

The Eng-
lish con-
quer Gua-
dalupe,
and raise
the island
to the
greatest
degree of
prosperity.

THE conquerors delivered them from these apprehensions. The English, indeed, are no merchants in their colonies. The proprietors of lands, who mostly reside in Europe, send their representatives whatever they want, and draw the whole produce of the estate by the return of their ship. An agent settled in some sea-port of Great-Britain, is intrusted with the furnishing the plantation, and receiving the produce. This was impracticable at Guadalupe; and the conquerors in this respect were obliged to adopt the custom of the conquered. The English, informed of the advantage the French made of their trade with the colonies, hastened, in imitation of them, to send their ships to the conquered island; and so multiplied their expeditions, that they overstocked the market, and sank the price of all European commodities. The colonist bought them at a very low price, and, in consequence of this plenty, obtained long delays for the payment.

To this credit, which was necessary, was soon added another arising from speculation, which enabled the colony to fulfil its engagements. A great number of negroes were carried thither, to hasten the growth and enhance the value of the plantations. It has been said in various memorials, all copied from each other, that the English had stocked Guadalupe with 30,000, during the four years and three months that they remained masters of the island. The registers of the custom houses, which may be depended on, as there could be no induce-

inducement for an imposition, attest that the number was no more than 18,721. This was sufficient to give the nation well-grounded hopes of reaping great advantages from their new conquest. But their ambition was frustrated, and the colony, with its dependencies, was restored to its former possessors in July 1763.

By the dependencies of Guadalupe, must be understood several small islands; which, being included in the district of her jurisdiction, fell with her into the hands of the English. Such is the Deseada, which seems to have been detached from Guadalupe by the sea, and is only separated by a small channel. It is a kind of rock, where nothing will grow but cotton. It is uncertain at what time it was first inhabited, but this little settlement is certainly not of long standing.

THE Saints, three leagues distant from Guadalupe, are two very small islands, which, with another yet smaller, make a triangle, and have a tolerable harbour. Thirty Frenchmen were sent thither in 1648, but were soon driven away by an excessive drought, which dried up their only spring, before they had time to make any reservoirs. A second attempt was made in 1652, and lasting plantations were made, which now yield fifty thousand weight of coffee and ninety thousand of cotton.

THIS is inconsiderable, but it is more than the produce of St. Bartholomew, which was peopled with fifty Frenchmen in 1648. They were all massacred in 1656 by a troop of Caribs from St. Vincent and Dominica, and not replaced till a considerable

siderable time after. In 1753 the colonists were no more than 170 in number, and their whole fortune consisted in 54 slaves, and 64,000 cocoa trees. Since the last peace, the population of the white people has amounted to 400, and that of the blacks to 500. The plantations have increased in the same proportions. The soil of this small island is very hilly, and extremely barren; but it has the convenience of a good harbour. The wretchedness of the inhabitants is so well known, that the English privateers, which frequently put in there during the late wars, have always paid punctually for what few refreshments they could spare them, though the miserable inhabitants were too weak to compel them. There is then some humanity left even in the breast of enemies and pirates; man is not naturally cruel; and only becomes so from fear or interest. The armed pirate, who plunders a vessel richly laden, is not destitute of equity, nor even of compassion for a set of poor defenceless islanders.

MARIGALANTE was wrested from her natural inhabitants, in 1648. The French, who had forcibly taken possession of it, were long annoyed by the ravages of the neighbouring islands, but at last are left peaceable possessors of a land they have cultivated, after they had depopulated it. This island is not large, but fruitful; it cultivates twenty-one sugar plantations, 7,000 cocoa trees, 562,700 stems of coffee, and 4,621,700 of cotton. If these frequent computations are tiresome to an indolent reader, who is not fond of taking account of his income, lest he should find he must set bounds to his expences,

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it is to be hoped they will be less so to political calculators, who find the exact measure of the strength of a state in the population and produce of lands, and are by these means the better enabled to compare the natural resources of the several nations. It is only by an exact register of this kind that we can judge of the present state of the maritime and trading powers that have settlements in America. In this case, accuracy constitutes the whole merit of the work ; and the reader must excuse inelegance in favour of real utility. The public is already sufficiently amused and imposed upon by eloquent and ingenious descriptions of distant countries ; it is now time to investigate truth, to compare the several histories of these countries, and to find out what they now are, rather than what they were formerly. For the history of what is past is of little more consequence to the present age, than the history of what is to come. Let us then again be permitted to observe, that no one should think it strange, that we so often repeat the numeration of negroes and cattle, of lands and their produce ; in a word, that we should so frequently enter into disquisitions which may appear dry, but are in fact the natural foundations of society. Why then should we be disgusted at seeing these things in a work which shews us our riches ? Let us, therefore, resume the subject, and compute the wealth of Guadalupe.

By the survey taken in 1767, this island, including the smaller settlements above-mentioned, contains 11,863 white people of all ages, and of both

sexes; 752 free blacks and mulattos; 72,761 slaves; which makes in all a population of 85,376 souls.

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THE cattle consists of 5,060 horses; 4,854 mules; 111 asses; 17,378 head of horned cattle; 14,895 sheep or goats; and 2,669 hogs. The provision is 30,476,218 trenches of cassava; 2,819,262 banana trees; 2,118 squares of land planted with yams and potatoes.

THE plantations contain 72 arnotto trees; 327 of cassia; 13,292 of cocoa; 5,881,176 of coffee; 12,156,769 of cotton; 21,474 squares of land planted with sugar-canes. The woods occupy 22,097 squares of land. There are 20,247 in meadows; and 6,405 are uncultivated or forsaken. Only 1,582 plantations grow cotton, coffee, and provisions. Sugar is made but in 401. These sugar-works employ 140 water-mills, 263 turned by oxen, and 11 windmills.

THE produce of Guadalupe, including what is poured in from the small islands under her dominion, ought to be very considerable. But in 1768, it yielded to the mother-country no more than 140,418 quintals of fine sugar; 23,603 quintals of raw sugar; 34,205 quintals of coffee; 11,955 quintals of cotton; 456 quintals of cocoa; 1,884 quintals of ginger; 2,529 quintals of logwood; 24 chests of sweatmeats; 165 chests of liqueurs; 34 casks of rum; and 1,202 undressed skins. All these commodities were sold in the colony only for 7,103,838 livres *, and the merchandise it has received from France has cost but 4,523,884 livres †.

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It is easy to judge from hence how great a part of the produce has been fraudulently exported, since it is known that the crops of Guadalupe are more plentiful than those of Martinico.

THE reasons for this superiority are obvious. Guadalupe employs a greater number of slaves upon the plantations than Martinico, which being at the same time an island that trades, and is concerned in plantations, consequently employs many of her negroes in the towns and in the navigation. There are fewer children in Guadalupe, because the fresh negroes brought to the new-erected works, are all adults, or at least able to work, and the black women seldom breed till the second year after their arrival in America. This may be owing to the change of climate and food affecting their constitutions, or, possibly, to a kind of reserve which they are more susceptible of than they are generally thought to be. Lastly, a great many of those blacks have been placed upon fresh lands; and ground newly cleared always yields more than that which is exhausted by long tillage.

BUT, if we may trust to some observers, the colony must expect that her plantations will decrease. They maintain that part of the island properly called Guadalupe had long since attained to the utmost degree of increase; and the Grand Terre, almost all of which is newly cleared, affords three fifths of the produce of the whole settlement. But it is impossible that this part of the island can preserve that flourishing state, to which it has casually arrived. The land is naturally barren, already

exhausted by forced culture, and the more exposed to the droughts so common in this climate, as there is hardly a tree left. Besides, the cultivation of it is attended with difficulty and expence, and the crops can only be kept up by a daily increase of labour and expence, and by constantly returning into the ground the net produce of each harvest.

YET many are of opinion that Guadalupe may augment her income by one sixth, and that the time of this increase is near at hand. The colony has no considerable debts. Having fewer wants than the richer islands, where affluence has long since increased the desires and taste of enjoyment, the inhabitants can spare the more for the improvement of their lands. Their situation, in the midst of the English and Dutch settlements, gives them an opportunity of running a fourth part of their sugars and cottons, at a higher price than they would sell for to the French captains, to purchase slaves and other articles in exchange at a cheaper rate. From these concurring circumstances, it is not unlikely that Guadalupe will soon rise of herself to the greatest prosperity, without assistance, and notwithstanding the restraints government has imposed upon it.

THE flourishing state to which Guadalupe had been raised by the English, when they restored it at the peace, excited a general surprise. It was beheld by the mother-country with that kind of consideration and respect which opulence inspires. Hitherto, this, as all the other windwards islands; had been subordinate to Martinico. It was rescued

Changes made in the administration of Guadalupe, since it has been restored to the dominion of France.

from this dependence, by appointing a governor and an intendant to preside over it. These new administrators, desirous of signalizing their arrival by some innovation, instead of suffering the commodities of this island to be disposed of through the usual channel, laid a plan for conveying them directly to Europe. This scheme was by no means disagreeable to the inhabitants, who owed Martinico two millions of livres,* which they were not ready to pay; and it was contrived that the ministry at home should adopt it. From that time all intercourse was strictly prohibited between the two colonies, which became as great strangers to each other, as if they had belonged to rival, or even to hostile powers.

THE immediate connections of Guadalupe with France had been hitherto confined to six or seven ships every year. This number was increased, but not sufficiently to enable the colony to dispose of the whole of her produce. This scheme was too hastily carried into execution. It should have been done very gradually, and with much caution; for, certainly, most innovations in politics require to be introduced and conducted with moderation. The harbours of Guadalupe are but bad, the coasting trade difficult, and the goods frequently damaged in loading and unloading. These and other reasons had deterred the merchants of the mother-country from opening a direct trade with the colony, notwithstanding the inconveniences and charges attending an indirect one. There was a degree of prejudice in this; but many precautions were necessary to induce them to get rid of it. It was

* 87,500*l*.

necessary to intice European ships to come to the colony by some privileges and indulgencies, which might balance the disadvantages that kept them away. With this kind of management the intended revolution would have been brought about gradually and insensibly. In short, the French ships should have been encouraged, in order to keep off those of Martinico; not those of Martinico driven away, to bring in the French ships, which might possibly never arrive.

SUCH was the commercial interest singly considered; but, perhaps, it might come in competition with political interests of much greater importance. This is what we shall now examine.

FRANCE has hitherto been unable effectually to protect her own colonies, or to annoy those of her most formidable rival. This double advantage can only be procured by a navy equal to that of a power, which openly declares itself her natural enemy. Till that period arrives, which, from her present situation, seems to be more and more remote, it concerns her, at least, to put her colonies in America in a condition to provide for themselves in case of a war: This they were able to do when Martinico was the center of all the windward settlements. From this island, full of traders and seamen, and the most happily situated of all the French islands, with regard to the winds that blow in these latitudes, were sent out constant supplies of men, arms, and provisions, which reached the other colonies in twenty-four hours, with a moral certainty of not being intercepted, notwithstanding

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the multiplicity and strength of the squadrons destined to cut off this communication.

NOR was this all. Swarms of privateers, sent out from Martinico, made it impossible for the British trade to be carried on without a convoy ; and as the convoys could not be regularly and continually provided, so as to bring a constant supply to a climate where provisions will not keep long, the English islands were often reduced to great scarcity. The provinces of North-America endeavoured, it is true, to make up this deficiency ; but the cargoes sold so cheap, that they could not afford a convoy ; so that the French privateers were certain of carrying off two fifths of their trade with the southern colonies. And, indeed, all the vigilance and skill of the English could not prevent the Martinico privateers, during the last war, from taking fourteen hundred vessels.

ALL these advantages of Martinico, in which Guadalupe had its share, and which greatly contributed to the victualling of both islands, and to distress the enemy's settlements, will be lost by the separation made between the colonies by the mother-country. Neither merchants, seamen, nor stationed ships, will be any more seen there ; and, if a war should break out, there will be no fitting out the smallest armament in those parts. It is the business of the court of Versailles to judge whether the direct navigation from the ports of France to Guadalupe can compensate for so great a sacrifice.

BUT can France be assured of enjoying a long and quiet possession of this island? If the enemy that might attack the colony, chose only to plunder the Grand Terre, and to carry off the slaves and cattle from thence, it would be impossible to prevent them, or even to retaliate upon them, unless an army were opposed to them. Fort Lewis, which defends this part of the settlement, is but a wretched star-fort, incapable of much resistance. All that could possibly be expected would be to prevent the devastation from extending any further. The nature of the country presents several situations, some more favourable than others, by which the progress of an assailant may be securely stopped, whatever his courage or his forces may be. He would, therefore, be forced to reembark and proceed to the attack of what is properly called Guadalupe.

THE landing of the enemy could be effected nowhere but at the bay of the Three Rivers, and at that of the Bailiff; or rather these two places would be most favourable to the success of his enterprise; because they would bring him nearer than any other to Fort St. Charles of the Basse-terre, where he would have less difficulties to encounter.

LET the enemy chuse whichever of these landings they please, they will find nothing more than a spot covered with trees, intersected with rivers, hollow ways, narrow passes, and steep ascents, which they must march over exposed to the French fire. When, by the superiority of their forces, they

have surmounted these difficulties, they will be stopped by the eminence of the great camp. This is a platform surrounded by nature with the river Galleon, and with dreadful ravines, to which art has added parapets, barbettes, flanks, and embrasures, to direct the artillery in the most advantageous manner. This intrenchment, though formidable, must be forced. It is not to be imagined that an intelligent general would ever leave such a post as this behind him : his convoys would be too much exposed, and he could not get up what would be necessary for carrying on the siege of Fort St. Charles without much difficulty.

If those who were first employed in fortifying Guadalupe, had understood the art of war, or even been only engineers, they would not have failed chusing the position between the river Cense and the river Galleon, for erecting their fortifications. The place then would have had towards the sea-side a front, that would have inclosed a harbour capable of containing forty sail of ships, which would have annoyed the enemy's fleet, without being themselves in the least exposed. The fronts towards the rivers Galleon and Cense would have been inaccessible, being placed upon the summit of two very steep ascents. The fourth front would have been the only place open to an attack ; and it would have been an easy matter to strengthen that as much as might have been thought proper.

By chusing the present position of fort St. Charles, the works, which were constructed there, ought at least

least to have flanked each other from the sea and from the heights. But the principles of fortification were so much neglected, that the fire was pointed entirely in a wrong direction, that the internal works were in all parts open to the view, and that the revetements might be battered from the bottom.

SUCH was the condition of Fort St. Charles, when in 1764 it was thought proper to put it in a state of defence. Perhaps, it might have been best to destroy it totally, and to place the fortifications on the position just pointed out. It was however thought necessary to cover the bad fort constructed by unskillful persons, with out-works; adding two bastions towards the sea-side; a good covered-way, which goes all round, together with a glacis, partly cut and partly in a gentle slope; two large places of arms with re-entering angles, having each a good redoubt, and behind these good tenailles, with caponieres and posterns of communication with the body of the place; two redoubts, one on the prolongation of the capital of one of the two places of arms, and the other at the extremity of an excellent intrenchment made along the river Galleon, the platform of which is defended by the cannon from another intrenchment made on the top of the bank of the other side of the same river; large and deep ditches, a reservoir for water, and a powder magazine, bomb proof; in a word, a sufficient quantity of works under ground to lodge a third part of the garrison. All these outworks well con-

trived being added to the fort, will enable an active and experienced commander to hold out a siege of two months, and perhaps more. But whatever may be the resistance that Guadalupe can oppose to the attacks of the enemy, it is time to pass on to St. Domingo.

Settlement
of the
French at
St. Domin-
go.

THIS island is sixty leagues in length ; its main breadth is about thirty ; and its circumference three hundred and fifty, or six hundred in coasting round the several bays. It is parted lengthways, from east to west, by a ridge of mountains, covered with woods, which, rising gradually, exhibit the finest prospect imaginable. Several of these mountains were formerly full of mines, and, perhaps, are so still ; others are fit for culture. Almost all of them form delicious and temperate vallies ; but in the plains, where the soil is very fertile, the air is so scorching hot as to be almost intolerable, especially in those places by the sea-side where the coast runs narrow, between the water and the back of the mountains, and is exposed to a double reflection of the sun, both from the rocks and the waves.

SPAIN was the sole proprietor of this large possession, when some English and French, who had been driven out of St. Christopher's, took refuge there in 1630. Though the southern coast, where they first settled, was in a manner forsaken, they considered, that being liable to be attacked by a common enemy, it was but prudent to secure a retreat. For this purpose they pitched upon Tortuga, a small island within two leagues of the great one ;

one; and twenty-five Spaniards, who were left to guard it, retired on the first summons.

THE adventurers of both nations, now absolute masters of an island eight leagues long and two broad, found a pure air, but no river, and few springs. The mountains were covered with valuable woods, and the fertile plains only wanted the hand of the cultivator. The northern coast appeared to be inaccessible; but the southern had an excellent harbour commanded by a rock, which required only a battery of cannon to defend the entrance of the island.

THIS happy situation soon brought to Tortuga a multitude of those people who are in search either of fortune or liberty. The most moderate applied themselves to the culture of tobacco, which grew into repute, while the more active went to hunt the buffaloes at St. Domingo, and sold their hides to the Dutch. The most intrepid went out to cruize, and performed such bold exploits as will be long remembered.

THIS settlement alarmed the court of Madrid. Judging by the losses they had already sustained, of the misfortunes they had still to expect, they gave orders for the destruction of the new colony. The general of the galleons chose, for executing his commission, the time when the brave inhabitants of Tortuga were out at sea or a hunting, and with that barbarity which was then so familiar to his nation, carried off or put to the sword all those who were left at home. He then withdrew, without leaving any garrison, fully persuaded
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that such a precaution was needless, after the vengeance he had taken. But he soon found that cruelty is not the method to secure dominion.

THE adventurers, informed of what had passed at Tortuga, and hearing at the same time that a body of five hundred men, destined to harass them, was getting ready at St. Domingo, judged that the only way to escape the impending ruin, was to put an end to that anarchy in which they lived. They, therefore, gave up personal independence to social safety, and made choice of one Willes to be at their head; an Englishman who had distinguished himself on many occasions by his prudence and valour. Under the guidance of this chief, at the latter end of 1638, they retook an island which they had possessed for eight years, and fortified it, that they might not lose it again.

THE French soon felt the effects of national partiality. Willes, having sent for as many of his countrymen as would enable him to give laws, treated the rest as subjects. Such is the natural progress of dominion; in this manner most monarchies have been formed. Companions in exile, war, or piracy, have chosen a leader, who soon usurps the authority of a master. At first he shares the power or the spoils with the strongest; till the multitude, crushed by the few, embolden the chief to assume the whole power to himself; and then monarchy degenerates into despotism. But such a series of revolutions can only take place in many years in great states. An island of sixteen leagues square is of too much consequence

quence to be peopled with slaves. The commander De Poincy, governor-general of the Windward islands, being informed of the tyranny of Willes, immediately sent forty Frenchmen from St. Christopher's, who collected fifty more on the coast of St. Domingo. They landed at Tortuga; and, having joined their countrymen on the island, they all together summoned the English to withdraw. The English, disconcerted at such an unexpected and vigorous action, and not doubting but so much haughtiness was supported by a much greater force than it really was, evacuated the island, and never returned.

THE Spaniards were not so tractable. They suffered so much from the depredations of the pirates which were daily sent out from Tortuga, that they thought their peace, their honour, and their interest, were equally concerned in getting that island once more in their own power. Three times they recovered it, and were three times driven out again. At last it remained in the hands of the French, in 1659, and they kept it till they were so firmly established at St. Domingo, as to disregard so small a settlement.

THEIR progress, however, was but slow, and they first drew the attention of the mother-country in 1665. Huntsmen, indeed, and pirates were continually seen hovering about from one island to another; but the number of planters, who were properly the only colonists, did not exceed four hundred. The government was sensible how necessary it was to multiply them; and the care of
this

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Measures
taken by
the French
to render
this colony
advanta-
geous.

this difficult work was committed to a gentleman of Anjou, named Bertrand Dogeron.

THIS man, whom nature had formed to be great in himself, independent of the smiles or frowns of fortune, had served fifteen years in the marines, when he went over to America in 1656. With the best-contrived plans, he failed in his first attempts; but the fortitude he shewed in his misfortunes made his virtues the more conspicuous; and the expedients he found out to extricate himself, heightened the opinion already entertained of his genius. The esteem and attachment, he had inspired the French with at St. Domingo and Tortuga, induced the government to intrust him with the care of directing, or rather of settling, that colony.

THE execution of this project was full of difficulties. It was necessary to subdue a lawless crew, who, till then, had lived in a state of the most absolute independence; to reconcile to labour a troop of plunderers, who delighted only in rapine and idleness; to prevail upon men accustomed to trade freely with all nations, to submit to the privileges of an exclusive company formed in 1664, for all the French settlements. When this was effected, it then became necessary to allure new inhabitants into a country which had been traduced as a bad climate, and which was not yet known to be so fertile as it really was.

DOGERON, contrary to the general opinion, was in hopes he should succeed. A long intercourse with men he was to govern, had taught him how they

they were to be dealt with ; and his sagacity could suggest, or his honest soul adopt no method of engaging them, but what was noble and just. The free-booters were determined to go in search of more advantageous latitudes ; he detained them, by relinquishing to them that share of the booty which his post entitled him to, and by obtaining for them from Portugal commissions for attacking the Spaniards, even after they had made peace with France. This was the only method to make these men friends to their country, who otherwise would have turned enemies, rather than have renounced the hopes of plunder. The buccaneers, or hunters, who only wished to raise a sufficiency to erect habitations, found him ready to advance them money without interest, or to procure them some by his credit. As for the planters, whom he preferred to all the other colonists, he gave them every possible encouragement within the power of his industrious activity.

THESE happy alterations required only to be made permanent. The governor wisely considered, that women could alone perpetuate the happiness of the men and the welfare of the colony, by promoting population. There was not one female on the new settlement. He therefore sent for some. Fifty came over from France, and were soon disposed of at a very high price. Soon after, a like number arrived, and were obtained on still higher terms. This was the only way to gratify the most impetuous of all passions without quarrels, and to propagate the human race without bloodshed. All
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the inhabitants expected to have female companions from their own country, to alleviate and to share their fate. But they were disappointed; none were afterwards sent over, except abandoned women, who used to engage themselves for three years in the service of the men. This method of loading the colony with the refuse of the mother-country, introduced such a profligacy of manners, that it became necessary to put a stop to so dangerous an expedient, but without substituting a better. By this neglect, St. Domingo lost a great many honest men, who could not live happy there, and was deprived of an increase of population, which might have proceeded from the colonists, who still preserved their attachment to the island. The colony has long felt, and, perhaps, feels to this day, the effects of so capital an error.

NOTWITHSTANDING this error, Dogeron found means to increase the number of planters to fifteen hundred in four years time, when there were only four hundred at his first coming. His successes were daily increasing; when they were suddenly stopped, in 1670, by an insurrection, which put the whole colony in a ferment. He was not at all censured for this unfortunate accident, in which he certainly had not the least share.

WHEN this worthy man was appointed by the court of France to the government of Tortuga and St. Domingo, he could only prevail upon the inhabitants to acknowledge his authority, by giving them hopes that the ports under his jurisdiction should be open to foreigners. Yet such was the
ascendent

ascendent he gained over their minds, that by degrees he established in the colony the exclusive privilege of the company ; which in time engrossed the whole trade. But this company became so elated with prosperity, as to be guilty of the injustice of selling their goods for two-thirds more than had till then been paid to the Dutch. So destructive a monopoly revolted the inhabitants. They took up arms ; and it was but a year after, that they laid them down, upon condition that all French ships should be free to trade with them, paying five *per cent.* to the company at coming in and going out. Dogeron, who brought about this accommodation, availed himself of that circumstance to procure two ships, seemingly destined to convey his crops into Europe, but which in fact were more the property of his colonists than his own. Every one shipped his own commodities on board, allowing a moderate freight. On the return of the vessel, the generous governor caused the cargo to be exposed to public view, and every one took what he wanted, not only at prime-cost, but upon trust, without interest, and even without notes of hand. Dogeron had imagined he should inspire them with sentiments of probity and greatness of soul, by taking no other security than their word. He was cut off by death in the midst of these parental offices, in 1673 ; leaving no other inheritance than an example of patriotism, and of every humane and social virtue.

HIS nephew Pouancey succeeded rather to the duties than to the honours of his place. With the same qualifications as Dogeron, he was not so great a man; because he followed his steps more from imitation than from natural disposition. Yet the undiscerning multitude placed an equal confidence in both; and both had the honour and happiness to establish the colony upon a firm footing, without laws and without soldiers. Their natural good sense, and their known integrity, determined all differences to the satisfaction of both parties; and public order was maintained by that authority which is the natural consequence of personal merit.

So wise a constitution could not be lasting; it required too much virtue to make it so. In 1684 there was so visible an alteration, that, in order to establish a due subordination at St. Domingo, two administrators were called in from Martinico, where good policy was already in a great measure settled. These legislators appointed courts of judicature in the several districts, accountable to a superior council at Little Gouave. In process of time this jurisdiction growing too extensive, a like tribunal was erected in 1702, at Cape St. Francis, for the northern districts.

ALL these innovations could hardly be introduced without some opposition. It was to be feared that the hunters and pirates, who composed the bulk of the people, averse from the restraints that were going to be laid upon them, would go over to the Spaniards and to Jamaica, allured by the prospect of great advantages. The planters

themselves

themselves were under some temptation of this kind, as their trade was clogged with so many restrictions, that they were forced to sell their commodities at a very low price. The former were gained by persuasions; the latter by the prospect of a change in their situation, which was truly desperate.

SKINS had been the first article of exportation from St. Domingo, as being the only things the buccaneers brought home. Tobacco was afterwards added by the culture of lands; and it was sold to great advantage to all nations. This trade was soon confined by an exclusive company; which, indeed, was in a short time abolished, but with no advantage for the sale of tobacco, since that was farmed out. The inhabitants, hoping to meet with some indulgence from government, as a reward for their submission, offered to give the king a fourth part of all the tobacco they should send into the kingdom, free of all charge, even of freight, upon condition they should have the entire disposal of the other three-fourths. They made it appear, that this method would bring in a clearer profit to the revenue than the forty sols * *per cent.* which were paid by the farmer. Private interests opposed so reasonable a proposal. This instance of severity exasperated the colonists; and, fortunately for them, they applied themselves wholly to the culture of indigo and cocoa. Cotton was a very promising article, because it had in former times greatly enriched the Spaniards; but they

* 1s. 9d.

they soon gave it up, for what reason is not known ; and in a few years not a single cotton plant was to be seen.

TILL then the labours had all been performed by hirelings, and by the poorest of the inhabitants. Some successful expeditions against the Spaniards, procured them a few negroes. The number was increased by two or three French ships, and much more by prizes taken from the English during the war of 1688 ; by an invasion of Jamaica, from whence the French brought away three thousand blacks, in 1694. Without slaves, the culture of sugar could not be undertaken ; but they alone were not sufficient. Money was wanting to erect buildings, and to purchase utensils. The profit some inhabitants made with the free-booters, who were always successful in their expeditions, enabled them to employ the slaves. They therefore undertook the planting of those canes, which convey the gold of Mexico to nations whose only mines are fruitful lands.

BUT the colony, which, though it had lost some of its Europeans, had still made a progress to the north and west, amidst the devastations that preceded the peace of Ryswick, was yet but little advanced to the south. This part, which includes fifty leagues of sea-coast, had not a hundred inhabitants, all living in huts, and all extremely wretched. The government could fix upon no better expedient, to make some advantage of so extensive and so fine a country, than to grant, in 1698, for the space of thirty years, the property

of it to a company, which took the name of *St. Louis*. This company, in imitation of Jamaica and Curassou, was to open a contraband trade with the Spanish continent, and to clear the vast tract of land included in the grant. This last object, as it was the most important, was soon the only one that was attended to.

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To advance the improvement of agriculture, the company freely granted lands to all who applied for them. Each person, according to his wants and abilities, obtained slaves that were to be paid for in three years; the men at the rate of six hundred livres*; and the women at the rate of four hundred and fifty livres†. The same credit was allowed for merchandise, though it was to be delivered at the market price. The company engaged to buy up all the produce of the lands at the same rate as those commodities were sold for in the other parts of the island. The society, which made so many concessions, had no other compensations for them but the exclusive right of buying and selling through the whole territory assigned to them. Even this dependence, oppressive to the colonist, was still alleviated by allowing him to take, where he pleased, whatever he was left in want of, and to pay out of his provisions whatever he might have occasion to buy.

THE monopolist, as a torrent that is lost in the abyss itself has made, works his own ruin by his rapaciousness, by draining the country where he exercises his tyranny. This mismanagement of the

oppressor, the dejection of the oppressed, both concur to check industry and trade in states subjected to exclusive privileges. The company of St. Louis affords an instance, among many others, of the ill effects of such private combinations. It was ruined by the knavery and extravagance of its agents; nor was the territory committed to its care, the better for all these losses. The plantations and people that were found there, when the company gave up her rights to the government in 1720, were chiefly owing to the contraband traders.

Misfortunes that happen to the colony.

It was during the long and bloody war begun on account of the Spanish succession, that this attempt had been made towards the improvement of the colony. It might have been expected to have made a speedy progress, when tranquillity was restored to both nations by the peace of Utrecht. These happy prospects were blasted by one of those calamities which it is not in the power of man to foresee. All the cocoa-trees upon the colony died in 1715. Dogeron had planted the first in 1665. In process of time they had increased; especially in the narrow valleys to the westward. There were no less than twenty thousand upon some plantations; so that, though cocoa sold for no more than five sols * a pound, it was become a plentiful source of wealth.

CULTIVATIONS of greater importance amply compensated this loss, when the colony was threatened with a total subversion. A considerable number

* Two-pence halfpenny.

number of its inhabitants, who had devoted twenty or thirty years labour in a burning climate, to lay up a competency to spend a comfortable old age in their native country, were returned to it, with a sufficient fortune to enable them to discharge their debts and purchase estates. Their commodities were paid them in bank notes, which proved useless to them. This fatal calamity obliged them to return poor into an island from whence they had departed rich; and reduced them in their old age, to solicit places, as stewards to the very people who had formerly been their servants. The sight of so many unfortunate persons, inspired a general detestation, both of Law's scheme, and of the India company, which was considered as accountable for this ill-concerted project of finance. This aversion, raised by mere compassion, was soon strengthened by very considerable personal interests.

In 1722, agents came from the India company, which had obtained an exclusive grant of the negro trade, on condition that they should furnish two thousand negroes yearly. This was evidently a double misfortune for the colony, which could not expect to get above one-fifth of the slaves they wanted, and foresaw that those would be sold at an extravagant price. Their discontent broke out into acts of the greatest violence. Some commissaries, who, by their insolent behaviour, had greatly heightened the dread naturally conceived of all monopoly, were forced to repass the seas. The buildings where they transacted their business were

burnt to the ground. The ships that came to them from Africa, were either denied admittance into the harbour, or not suffered to dispose of their cargoes. The chief governor, who endeavoured to oppose these disturbances, saw his authority despised, and his orders disobeyed, as they were not enforced by any compulsive power: he was even put under arrest. Every part of the island resounded with the clamours of sedition, and the noise of arms. It is difficult to say how far these excesses would have been carried, had not government had the prudence to make concessions. This extreme confusion lasted two years. At length, the inconveniencies resulting from anarchy disposed the minds of all parties to peace, and tranquillity was restored without having recourse to violent measures.

From that period, no colony ever so much improved its time as that of St. Domingo. It advanced with the utmost rapidity to a prosperous state. The two unfortunate wars which annoyed its seas, have only served to compress its strength, which has increased the more since the cessation of hostilities. A wound is soon healed when the constitution is sound. Diseases themselves are a kind of remedies, which, by the expulsion of the vitiated humours, add new vigour to a robust habit of body. They restore the equilibrium of the whole frame, and impart to it a more regular and uniform motion. So war seems to strengthen and support national spirit in many states of Europe, which might be enervated and corrupted by the prosperity

prosperity of commerce, and the enjoyments of luxury. The immense losses which almost equally attend victory and defeat, excite industry and quicken labour. Nations will recover their former splendour, provided their rulers will let them follow their own bent, and not pretend to direct their steps. This principle is peculiarly applicable to France, where nothing more is requisite to prosperity than to give a free course to the activity of the inhabitants. Wherever nature leaves them at full liberty, they succeed in giving her powers their full scope. St. Domingo affords a striking instance of what may be expected from a good soil and an advantageous situation, in the hands of Frenchmen.

THIS colony has 180 leagues of sea-coast, lying to the north, the west, and the south. The southern part extends from cape Tiburon, to the point of Cape Beata, which takes in about fifty leagues of coast, more or less confined by the mountains. The Spaniards had built two large towns in that part, at the time of their prosperity, but forsook them in their decline. The vacant towns were not immediately occupied by the French, who might not think themselves in safety so near the town of St. Domingo, where was centered the chief force of the nation upon whose ruins they were rising. Their privateers, who commonly assembled at the little island called Vache Island, to cruize upon the Castilians, and divide their spoils, emboldened them to begin a settlement on the neighbouring coast in 1673. It

Present
state of this
colony.

was soon destroyed, and was not resumed till a considerable time after. The company appointed to settle and extend this colony might be of some service to it; but the progress it made was chiefly owing to the English of Jamaica, and the Dutch of Curassou; who, having resolved to carry almost all their slaves to this place, bought up the produce of a land which they themselves contributed to improve. The merchants of France have at length become informed; and since the year 1740, they frequent that part which is the most distant of the colony, though the sailing out of this road is sometimes very tedious and difficult, on account of the winds.

THE settlement that lies to windward of the rest, is called Jaquemel. Though of a pretty long standing, it contains but forty-two houses. The soil of this and the neighbouring settlements is so hemmed in by the mountains, that no great degree of opulence is to be expected from it; but, in another view, it merits the attention of government. It lies very conveniently for the reception of any troops or warlike stores, which the mother-country might choose to convey to the colony in time of war, and which would run great risques in taking the north side; that being the natural and constant station of the enemy's squadrons. Jaquemel may also be of great service in another view. The little Dutch island of Curassou affords in times of hostilities an inexhaustible store of provisions. Their privateers being strong and bold enough to beat the little privateers of Jamaica, the only

English vessels that have hitherto obstructed their operations, have poured an immense stock of provisions into the port of Jaquemel, during the late troubles. They will continue this supply as long as is required, provided their landing is only secured by proper batteries, or by the protection of a frigate or two. This place will supply the western side of St. Domingo, by a road of eight leagues only, which leads to Leogane and Port-au-Prince; and the southern side by small boats that can easily range the coast.

WHILE Jaquemel furnishes the supplies, St. Lewis is the defence of the island. This town, built in the beginning of the century, lies at the bottom of a bay, which makes a tolerable harbour. It contains but forty houses, and seems to be naturally destined to perpetual poverty, wanting even the assistance of art to supply its inhabitants with water fit to drink. Some Jews, who live without the gates of St. Lewis, at length undertook to form an aqueduct, which they engaged to construct at their own expence. This place is the seat of government, and receives the few men of war which appear in these latitudes. This is the only advantage it has; and it is by this it is able to protect the trade and wealth of Cayes, which lies ten leagues lower.

THIS town seems to have been placed, as it were, fortuitously in the bottom of a shallow bay, which grows more and more so, and has but three channels. The anchorage is so confined and so dangerous during the equinox, that ships which happen

pen to be there at that season, are frequently lost. The great quantity of mud brought thither by a torrent, called the south river, has increased to such a degree, that in thirty years time there will be no entrance. The canal, formed by the vicinity of Vache island, is of no use, and only obstructs the navigation. The creeks in this place are the resort of the privateers of Jamaica. As they cruize there without sails, and can observe without being seen, they always have the advantage of the wind over such vessels as are hindered by the violence and constant course of the winds from passing above the island. If any men of war should be forced to put into this bad harbour, the impossibility of surmounting this obstacle and that of the currents, in order to get to windward of the island, would oblige them to follow the track of merchant ships. Doubling, therefore, one after another the point of Labacou, on account of the shoals, these ships would get between the land and the enemy's fire, with the disadvantage of the wind, and would infallibly be destroyed by an inferior squadron.

THE town of Cayes is not better than its harbour. It contains 280 houses, all sunk into swampy ground, and most of them surrounded with stagnant water. The air of this spot is foul and unwholesome; and on this account, as well as the badness of the harbour, it has often been wished that the trade with the mother-country could be transferred to St. Lewis. But the efforts that have been made to effect this, have hitherto been

been unsuccessful; and will for ever be so, for very evident reasons.

BOOK
XIII.

THE town of Cayes is surrounded with a plain nearly six leagues long, and four and a half broad. The ground which is very even, extremely fruitful, and in every part fit for the culture of sugar, is well watered in many places, and may be so every where. Nothing is wanting to make it rival the plain of the cape, but an equal number of slaves. These are daily increasing, and will soon multiply to such a number as to make the most of this fertile spot. So many advantages are an inducement to persons who cross the seas merely in hopes of making a speedy fortune, to go directly to Cayes.

To pretend to thwart this partiality would be to retard to no purpose the progress of a good settlement. Even the caprices of industry should be indulged by government. The least uneasiness in the trader creates distrust. Political and military reasonings will never prevail against those of interest. The colonies are influenced by no other rule. Wherever there is the greatest plenty of specie, there they settle. Trade is like a plant that only flourishes in a soil of its own choosing. It disdains every kind of restraint. Forbidding the trade of Cayes would be just as absurd a piece of tyranny, as ordering the dealers at a fair to quit their stalls.

ALL that the French ministry could reasonably propose, would be to fortify, and in some measure to render this place more wholesome. Both might be effected, by digging a ditch all round
the

the town, and the rubbish would serve to fill up the marshes within. The ground being raised higher by this contrivance, would consequently grow drier; the water, which would be brought down by a gentle descent from the river into this deep ditch, would, by the assistance of some fortifications, secure the town from the attacks of the privateers; and would even afford a temporary defence, and allow time to capitulate with a squadron.

GREATER improvements might still be made. Why not allow a factitious harbour to an important mart; which will soon be stopped? The merchant ships that seek shelter in what is called the Flemish Bay, less than two leagues to windward of Cayes, seem to point out this spot as the harbour that this town stands in want of. It would contain a considerable number of men of war, safe from all winds; would afford them several careening places; would admit of their doubling the Vache Island to windward, and enable them to carry on with the town along-side the coast, an intercourse; which, being protected by batteries properly disposed, would intimidate the privateers. The only inconvenience is, that the ship-worm is more apt to injure the vessel in this place than in other parts; on account of the nature of the bottom, and the calmness of the sea.

THERE is a safer anchorage at the town of Coteaux; but it is only fit for small vessels. The foreign trade which is allowed there in time of war, and can scarce be prevented in time of peace, has

has rendered this port of consequence ; which is, however, almost in a defenceless state. Next to Cayes, this is the principal town upon the coast, where most business is transacted. Its territory, and the adjacent country, whose productions it consumes, abounds chiefly in indigo ; but very little of this is conveyed to France.

THE louthern part terminates at Cape Tiburon. The little settlement that has been formed there, in lieu of a harbour, has only a road, in which the sea is constantly rough ; but its fortifications are a protection to such merchant ships as are able to double the cape. It affords a retreat both to neutral ships, which being pursued by pirates, have not been able to reach Jaquemel ; as well as to men of war, which may be in danger from the violence of the winds in these latitudes ; or from the superior strength of an enemy's squadron.

THOUGH this coast is the least of the three belonging to the French colony of St. Domingo, and that on the last day of December, 1766, it contained but 33,663 slaves ; yet it is so considerable, that the mother-country may expect in time as great a produce from it as from the richest of her Windward islands. It is at present greatly exposed from its vicinity to Jamaica ; but in time it may be in a condition to threaten that bulwark of the English, when once the lands are improved, the country well peopled, the sea-ports fortified and defended, and when once it has attained that degree of prosperity to which a good administration ought to bring it.

IN passing from the south to the west, the next settlement is at Cape Donna Miara. It is at present so weak, that in twenty leagues of sea-coast, there are not above fifty Europeans able to bear arms. And, indeed, a declaration of war is to them a signal of retreat, although they ventured to remain in their habitations during the late hostilities. But every inhabitant took care to provide a subterraneous retreat for himself and his slaves, whenever any privateer appeared. Notwithstanding this precaution, several of their works have been surprised and carried off.

THE next district, known by the name of *la Grande Anse*, or *l'Anse de Feremie*, is not so liable to these accidents. This town, situated on a rising ground where the air is pure, has some good houses, and seems to promise to be successful. The great plenty of its cotton and cocoa has induced some merchants to trade there, and it is to this place that privateers, which cruize upon the coast of Jamaica, bring in their prizes. Culture and population have made some progress, and promise much more.

THE same success is not to be expected at *Petit Guavé*. This place, so famous in the times of the free-booters, is now only a heap of ruins. Its former splendour was owing to a road, where ships of all burdens found excellent anchorage, conveniences for refitting, and a shelter from all winds. As a harbour it would still be considerable and frequented, were it not for the vicinity of Go-nave, and for the stagnating waters of the river

Abaret, which is lost in the morasses, and renders the air foul and unwholesome. BOOK
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LEOGANE, situated within five leagues of Petit Guave, contains 317 houses, which form a long square, and fifteen streets, spacious and well laid out. It stands half a league from the sea, in a narrow but fertile plain, well cultivated, and watered with a great many rivulets. The inhabitants are extremely desirous of having a canal opened from the town to the anchorage, which would save the inconvenience of land carriage. If it were advisable to have a fortified town on the western coast, undoubtedly Leogane would claim the preference. It stands upon plain ground, is not commanded by any eminence, nor can it be annoyed by any ships. But to secure it from being surprised, it should be surrounded by a rampart of earth with a deep ditch, which might be filled with water without the least expence. This might be effected at a much less expence, than the works which have been begun at Port-au-Prince; and with what success we must now leave the reader to determine.

THE western part of the island was the first that was cultivated by the French, that being at the greatest distance from the Spanish forces, which they had then reason to fear. This being in the center of the coasts in their possession, the seat of government was fixed there. It was first settled at the Petit Guave, but they were soon disgusted with the barrenness and unwholesomeness of this spot. It was then transferred to Leogane, and afterwards

to Port-au-Prince, which in 1750 became the residence of a superior council, a commander in chief and an intendant. The place that was made choice of for the intended capital, is an opening about 1400 toises long in a direct line, and commanded on both sides. Two harbours, formed by some islets, have afforded a pretence for this injudicious choice. The harbour intended for trading vessels being now almost filled up, can no longer admit men of war with safety; and the great harbour designed for these, being as unwholesome as the other, from the exhalations of the small islands, neither is nor can be defended by any thing against a superior enemy.

A SMALL squadron might even block up a stronger one in so unfavourable a position. Gonave, which divides the bay in two, would leave a free and safe passage for the smaller squadron; the sea winds would prevent the other squadron from getting up to it; the land winds, by facilitating the exit of the enemy's ships from the harbour, would leave them the choice of retreating through either of the outlets of St. Mark and Leogane; and they would, all other circumstances being equal, always have the advantage of keeping Gonave between them and the French squadron.

BUT what would be the consequence if the French squadron should prove the weakest? Disabled and pursued, it could never gain a shelter that runs so deep into land as Port-au-Prince, before the conqueror had taken advantage of its defeat. If the disabled ships should reach the place,
nothing

nothing could hinder the enemy from pursuing them almost in a line, and even from entering the king's harbour, where they would take refuge.

THE best of all stations for a cruize is that where one may chuse whether one will accept or decline the fight, where there is but a small space to guard, where the whole may be viewed from one central point, where a safe anchorage may be found at every tack, where one may be concealed without going far, procure wood and water at pleasure, and sail in open seas, in which there is nothing to fear but from squalls. These are the advantages that an enemy's squadron will always have over the French ships at anchor in Port-au-Prince. A single frigate might safely come and bid them defiance, and be sufficient to intercept any trading ships that should attempt to go in or out without a convoy.

NEVERTHELESS, a harbour so unfavourable as this hath determined the building of the town. It extends along the sea-shore the space of 1200 toises, that is, nearly along the opening which the sea has made in the center of the western coast. In this great extent, which runs in to the depth of 550 toises, are, as it were lost, 558 houses or dwelling places, dispersed in 29 streets. The drainings of the torrents that fall from the hills, render this place always damp, without supplying it with good water. The inhabitants must send to a considerable distance to procure some that is wholesome. Add to all this, the little security there is in a place commanded on the land side, and on the sea side easy of access in all parts.

Even the small islands which divide the harbours would be so far from defending the town from an invasion, that they would only serve to cover the landing.

THIS description, which will not be contradicted by any unprejudiced man acquainted with the place, plainly shews that the government has bestowed too much attention on Port-au-Prince. It would be a fatal error obstinately to oppose nature, and endeavour to defend by art a place that lies open to invasion on all sides. It would still be a greater one to collect there the courts of justice, troops, warlike stores, provisions, the arsenal, in a word, all that constitutes the support of a great colony, and at the same time to leave it open to the enemy. This port ought merely to serve for the embarkation of the crops gathered in the adjacent fields, and in the rich plain of the Cul-de-sac. This would only require a guard sufficient to prevent a surprize, and to secure the retreat of the inhabitants, who will always be ready to abandon a place, which must inevitably surrender on the first attack.

SAINT MARK will never be in a more flourishing state than Port-au-Prince. This town is not very deep, but extends along the shore, at the bottom of a bay crowned with a crescent of hills, which are only parted from the sea by a very small plain. Nature has left this interval of life and cultivation between the aridity of the mountains and the abyss of the waters. But these hills, though barren, are not altogether useless: they have

have the property, which is found in no other part of the colony, of furnishing as good free-stone as any in Europe, and the coast itself supplies it without much labour. With this stone the town is built. It consists of 154 houses, formerly defended by an intrenchment of earth, which is now destroyed.

B O O K
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ST. MARK is a very trading place. All such commodities as are not sent to Port-au-Prince are brought thither, as likewise are all the crops gathered from within the town to the mole of St. Nicholas. The prosperity of this place would be greatly increased, if the plain of the Artibonite could be watered, which is naturally too dry, but would surpass the best lands in fruitfulness, if this could be once effected.

THE Artibonite takes its name from a river which divides it lengthways, almost from one end to the other. The waters of this river confined by sluices, flow constantly on the highest part of the plain. The height of the bed of the river has long ago suggested the idea of dividing it, and it has been geometrically demonstrated that this is practicable; such considerable advantages are enlightened nations able to obtain over nature itself. But a project, founded on mathematical knowledge, ought not to be carried into execution without the utmost caution. The impetuosity of the stream, when swelled by rains, and the softness of the soil on which the river flows, make it very dangerous to make any alteration in the banks. The smallest outlet, injudiciously made, would in a few moments

open such an enormous breach, as would make way for very alarming and destructive inundations over a vast tract of land.

NEVERTHELESS, all the proprietors are impatient to see this great work undertaken. But administration must judge whether private societies, which solicit leave to procure conveniences of water that can only serve to enrich their own grounds, would not be detrimental to the project of watering the whole country. Rather than suffer public welfare to give place to private interest, the government should assist those who cannot afford to contribute towards the general conveyance of water. They will soon be repaid by an increase of one sixth in the produce of the colony. This increase would be greater still, if a method could be devised to drain that part of the coast which is overflowed in the waters of the Artibonite. Thus it is that the civilized man makes the earth subservient to his own use, by altering the course of the rivers. The fertility he imparts to the land can alone justify his conquests, if indeed art and labour, laws and virtues, may be allowed in process of time to atone for the injustice of an invasion.

THE western part of the colony, which on the last day of December, 1766, contained alone 83,080 slaves, is separated from the northern part by the mole of St. Nicholas, which lays on both coasts. At the head of the cape is a good, safe, and commodious harbour. It stands directly opposite to Point Maizi, in the island of Cuba, and seems naturally

turally destined by this position to become the most important post in all America for the convenience of navigation. The opening of the bay is 1450 toises broad. The road leads to the harbour, and the harbour to the basin. All this great recess is wholesome, though the waters of the sea are almost in a state of stagnation there. The basin, which seems as if made for the purpose of careening, has not the inconvenience of close harbours: it is open to the west and north winds; and yet, if they blow ever so hard, they can never interrupt or retard any work that is done in the harbour. The peninsula where the harbour is situated, rises gradually to the plains, which stand upon a very large basis; it seems, as it were, a single mountain, with a broad and flat top, descending with a gentle slope to unite with the rest of the island.

THE mole of St. Nicholas was long neglected by the inhabitants of St. Domingo. The bare hills and flat rocks it abounded with, afforded nothing worth their notice. The use which the English made of it during the last war, has rendered it of some kind of consequence. The French ministry, instructed by their very enemies, sent over a number of Acadians and Germans, who all perished there with astonishing rapidity. This is constantly the fate that attends all new settlements between the tropics. The few that have out-lived the fatal effects of the climate, and those of disappointment and poverty, are daily deserting the poor and barren soil of St. Nicholas. Possibly the

freedom granted to foreigners to frequent this place, may put a stop to emigration. Perhaps the facility with which the colonists may be able to dispose of their crops and their cattle in consequence of this communication, may fix them upon the lands allotted to them. They afford, however, no commodities fit for Europe, except cotton.

THE next settlement on the north coast is called Port Paix. It owed its origin to the neighbourhood of Tortuga, whose inhabitants took refuge there when they forsook that island. The grounds were cleared so early, that this is one of the healthiest spots in St. Domingo, and has long since attained the utmost degree of richness and population it is capable of; but these are not very considerable, though industry has been carried so far as even to pierce through mountains for the conveyance of water to moisten the grounds. They have very little sugar, and chiefly apply themselves to the culture of indigo, coffee, and cotton. Port Paix is on all sides so difficult of access, that it is in a manner cut off from the rest of the island. The next settlement to this retired place is Cape François.

THIS town is built on the side of an extensive plain, twenty leagues long and four broad. Few lands are better watered; but there is not one river where a sloop can go up above three miles. All this great space is intersected with strait roads, forty feet wide, and planted on both sides with hedges of citron-trees, thick enough to serve as a fence against the beasts. There are long avenues of tall

tall trees leading up to several habitations. It were to be wished such as these had been planted along the roads: for they would not only have been ornamental, but would also have afforded a delightful shade for travellers, and prevented that scarcity of wood which is already complained of. Though the French had long been sensible of the value of this soil, which is rich and fruitful beyond description, they did not set about cultivating it till the year 1670, when they had nothing to apprehend from the inroads of the Spaniards, who till then had continued in that neighbourhood with a considerable force. The method that was taken of bringing thither the inhabitants of Santa Cruz and St. Christopher's, hastened the progress of this settlement. It now produces the greatest quantity of sugar of any place in the world.

THE plain, which is bounded to the north only by the sea, is terminated to the south by a ridge of mountains, which varies in depth from four to eight leagues. Few of them are very high; several of them may be cultivated to the very summit, and they are all intersected at intervals with exceeding fine plantations of coffee and indigo. In these delightful vales, all the sweets of spring are enjoyed, without either winter or summer. There are but two seasons in the year, and they are equally fine. The ground, always laden with fruits and covered with flowers, realizes the delights and riches of poetical descriptions. Wherever we turn our eyes we are enchanted with a variety of objects, coloured and reflected by the clearest light.

The air is temperate in the day-time; and the nights are constantly cool. The inhabitants of the plain, upon which the sun darts his most powerful rays, repair to these mountains to breathe a cooler air, and allay their thirst with wholesome water. Happy the mortal who first taught the French to settle on this delicious spot!

THIS man was one of those whom the spirit of intoleration in religious matters began to drive out from their native country. A Calvinist, named Gobin, went and reared the first habitation at this cape. More houses were built as the grounds were cleared. This settlement had already made such progress in the compass of five and twenty years, as to excite the jealousy of the English. They joined their forces with those of Spain, and, attacking it both by land and sea, in 1695, they took, plundered, and reduced it to ashes.

A GREAT advantage might have been made of this misfortune. Interest, which is the primary founder of all colonies, had induced the inhabitants to chuse in a harbour that is three leagues in circumference, the foot of a hill for the portion of the cape, because it was the place that lay most convenient for the anchorage. This situation, however, being unwholesome, should have induced the colonists to settle somewhere else. This circumstance they did not attend to, but rebuilt their town where it never ought to be built at all, in a bottom, in which the rays of the sun are rendered more scorching by the reflection of the mountains; and the wind can only come from the coast over the marshes. Yet such is the richness of

the adjacent country, that the town has always prospered, and increased in buildings more and more pleasant and beautiful.

THE cape is now cut by twenty-nine strait streets, into 226 clusters of houses, which amount to 810 ; but these streets are too narrow, and having no slope, are always dirty ; for, as they are paved only in the middle, the kennels, which are not even on each side, gather into puddles and common shores, instead of draining off the waters.

SEVERAL squares have been planned in this city. That of Notre Dame, though an old one, is hardly levelled. It is a long square, with a fountain in the middle, which is often dry, for want of being properly supplied. A church has been begun some years since ; but its immense size, the want of money, and the tedious importation of stone from Europe, makes the work go on very slowly. The square of Clugny, which is a regular one, was built from necessity, to remove an offensive morass ; and the drying it up must certainly contribute to the wholesomeness of the air. The governor's house, the barracks, and a royal magazine, are the only public buildings that attract the notice of the curious ; but the humane observer cannot avoid beholding with pleasure those foundations that are called the houses of Providence. Most of the French, who first come into the colony, are destitute of resources and talents, and before they have acquired industry to procure subsistence, become subject to disorders that are often fatal. At the cape these helpless distressed men are taken into two habitations, where
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the men and the women are severally provided with every thing they want till they can get employed. It is a disgrace that such an excellent institution has not been imitated in other places ; a neglect equally repugnant to humanity and good policy.

It would be for the interest of trade to erect in all colonies such hospitable houses as those of St. Domingo. These may be said to be truly pious and divine institutions, as they are calculated for the preservation of mankind. Whether it is owing to this precaution or other circumstances, certain it is, that fewer in proportion die at the cape, than in the other towns along the sea coast. The care that has been taken to purify the air by draining the fens, the thorough clearing of the hills, the proximity of a plain almost completely cultivated, all these circumstances have concurred to correct the noxious influence of an unhealthy situation.

THE harbour of the cape deserves to receive the rich produce of all the adjacent country ; and it is admirably well adapted to admit the ships that come from Europe. The air is the best in all the island. It lies open to none but the north-east wind, and cannot even be hurt by this, the entrance being full of reefs, which break the violence of the waves. A ship gets out very easily, and soon launches into the open sea.

FOURTEEN leagues to windward of the cape is Fort Dauphin, It was formerly a town, which was called Bayaha ; but, since it has been removed
nearer

nearer to the sea, has changed both its name and place. The new town lies in the inmost center of a spacious harbour, which has only one outlet, formed by a channel, 1500 toises long, and about 100 broad. It is surrounded by a river to the west, and terminated by the sea shore on the east. The fort stands on a very small peninsula to the north; and on the southern side is the plain. The town contains as yet but seventy houses. It is at a sufficient distance from the mountains, to be out of the reach of any hill that might reflect the heat; but some fens in the neighbourhood render the air unwholesome. The fortifications are sufficient to keep a squadron at bay for two or three days.

THOUGH this is such a fine and safe harbour, the major part of the produce of its own plain is still sent to the Cape. The mass of trade will always attract the less branches; and great sea-ports will occasion the smaller to be neglected, and to decline.

IN 1720, the commodities of the whole colony of St. Domingo amounted only to 1,200,000 pounds weight of indigo, 1,400,000 of white sugar, and 21,000,000 of raw sugar. The plantations were extended; and in 1734, those of cotton and coffee were added. In 1754, the commodities of the colony were sold upon the spot for 28,833,581 livres *. It is true they received from the mother country to the amount of 40,628,780 livres † value of merchandise. But if the colony became indebted, it was only to hasten its prosperity. The population

Produce
and popu-
lation of
the colony.

* 1,261,469l. 3s. 4d.

† 1,777,509l. 2s. 6d.

population of whites amounted then to 7758 men, capable of bearing arms; to 2525 women, either widows or married; to 781 young marriageable persons; to 1691 boys, and 1503 girls, under twelve years of age. Among the blacks, or free mullattoes, were reckoned 1362 men fit to bear arms; 1626 widows, or married women; 1009 boys, and 864 girls, under twelve years of age. The manufactures were peopled with 79,785 negroes; 53,817 negro women; 20,158 negro boys, and 18,428 negro girls. Of raw sugar they worked 344 plantations, and 255 white sugar; 3379 of indigo; and there were cultivated 98,946 cocoa trees; 6,300,367 cotton plants; and 21,053,842 cassia trees. The provisions of the colony were 5,520,503 banana trees; 1,201,849 plots of potatoes; 226,098 plots of yams; and 2,80,586 trenches of manior. The cattle did not exceed 63,454 horses and mules, and 92,946 heads of horned cattle.

IN 1764, St. Domingo had 8,786 white men able to bear arms; of which, 4,306 lived in the north, 3,470 in the west, and only 1,010 in the south. These forces were increased by 4,114 mullattoes, or free negroes, who were enrolled. Of these there were 497 to the south, 2,250 to the west, and 1370 to the north.

THE number of slaves was 206,000, men, women and children, parcelled out as follows: 12,000 in nine cities, some artificers, and some employed in domestic services; 4000 employed in the smaller towns, in the tile and brick-kilns, pot houses, lime-kilns,

kilns, and other necessary handicrafts; 1000 destined to the cultivation of provisions and kitchen grounds; and 180,000 reserved for the care of commodities for exportation. Since this estimate was made, about 15,000 negroes have been brought annually into the colony. These have not supplied the place of the dead, for that vacancy was more than filled up by slaves smuggled into the island; nor have they been employed as servants in the cities, where a less number is kept than formerly. These fresh negroes were all able-bodied men, and have been employed in the labours of the plantations, which they must have greatly improved. Neither have the plantations received any injury by the substituting of some articles in lieu of others.

INSTEAD of indigo, which began to yield but little on some grounds that were too much exhausted, forty new sugar plantations have been formed. There are now 260 to the north, 197 to the west, and 84 to the south. The refining works have been increased in still greater proportion than the plantations; and the quantity of white sugar is almost doubled. Cotton has increased greatly in the valleys to the west, and coffee prodigiously in those to the north. Some plantations of cocoa have been even formed in the woods of the great bay. Peace has restored the old branches of trade, and opened new ones. Under her protection every thing prospers; and she constitutes the felicity of both worlds.



WE may affirm, from undoubted authority, that in the course of the year 1767, there have been exported from this colony no less than 72,718,781 pounds weight of raw sugar; 51,562,013 pounds of white sugar; 1,769,562 pounds of indigo; 150,000 pounds of cocoa; 12,197,977 pounds of coffee; 2,965,920 pounds of cotton; 8,470 parcels of hides in the hair; 10,350 tanned hides; 4,108 casks of rum; and 21,104 casks of molasses.

THIS is the sum total of the productions entered at the custom-houses of St. Domingo, in 1767, and exported on board 347 ships sent from France. The goods taken in under sail, the overplus of the weight delivered in the payment of the smuggled blacks, cannot have carried away less than a sixth part of the produce of the colony, which must be added to the known estimate of her wealth. Since that period all the plantations are increased, those of coffee trebled.

OPINIONS differ as to the increase it is still capable of attaining. Some think it may be doubled; others rate it only at one third. All agree that the culture will still admit of great improvements, which may be expected from the activity of the nation that is possessed of so improveable a soil. But can she hope to reap the fruits of her labours? Is it certain that she will always preserve the property of them? These two questions deserve a serious discussion.

THE trade which the French of St. Domingo carry on with their indolent neighbours, is of more consequence than it is generally thought to be. They supply them with stockings, hats, linens, guns, hard ware, and some wearing apparel; and receive in return, horses, horned cattle both for slaughter and for labour, smoked beef and bacon, skins; and lastly, twelve or fifteen hundred thousand livres *, which the court of Madrid devotes annually to the maintenance of the governor, the clergy, and the troops in the first settlement the Spaniards ever made in the new world. Excepting some few Portugal pieces which retain a nominal value, far above their intrinsic worth, they have no coin but what they draw from their neighbours the Spaniards. Revolutions only, which it is impossible to foresee, can ever put a stop to this intercourse between the two nations that divide St. Domingo, and which is carried on both by land and sea. Here mutual wants prevail over natural antipathy; or else the uniformity of climate stifles these seeds of division.

Trade of the French of St. Domingo with the Spaniards settled in the same island.

It were to be wished that the French colonists were as certain of always keeping up their connections with Europe. Had the first adventurers who went over to St. Domingo been in a condition to think of plantations, they would, doubtless, have seized upon that part of the island which lies most to windward; which they might easily have done. The plains on that side are large and fertile; the land lies quite open to the ocean; the coasts are safe;

In what manner the colony can insure the continuance of its connections with Europe.

* About 59,000*l.* on an average.

safe; the harbours may be entered as soon as discovered, and one loses sight of them the very day one sails out. The track is such, that no enemy can form any ambuscade; the coast is unfit for cruising; these latitudes are convenient for the Europeans, and the passage expeditious. But as the scheme of the first French navigators was to attack the Spanish ships, and to carry on their hostilities on the gulph of Mexico, the possessions they occupied in St. Domingo were surrounded by Cuba, Jamaica, the Turks; by Tortuga, the Caicos, Gouava, and Lucayos islands, where the roads lie concealed, and are the lurking places of the privateers. They are also surrounded by a multitude of sand-banks and rocks, which make the progress of a ship slow and uncertain; and by narrow seas, which must give a great advantage to the enemy, either for landing, for blocking up, or for cruising.

AGAINST so many dangers, no effectual remedy will ever be discovered, but a squadron constantly kept there in time of war, and always in motion. Whether it has been owing to inability in the government to afford this kind of protection to the colony, or to the negligence of the admirals, who have lain by inactive in the harbour with their armed vessels; certain it is, that hitherto the only plan of defence which could secure the trade of St. Domingo, has never been pursued.

If the ministry and the navy should alter their principles and their conduct, the first thing to be done will be to protect the latitudes about the cape, where

where the navigators coming from France always enter in time of war, and generally too in time of peace. The necessity of reconnoitring the promontory of la Grange, situated ten leagues higher up, brings thither swarms of privateers, who are seldom disappointed. Two well-armed vessels stationed there, would easily make themselves masters of that cruize. If, contrary to all expectation, the enemy should bring a superior force, no doubt they would be obliged to yield to them; but it would probably be only for a short time.

HAVING thus facilitated the entrance of ships to the Cape, the next thing would be to secure their going out; which might be effected in the following manner. One of the two men of war, which should always be stationed in the harbour, would take several merchant-men under her convoy, see them safe out, and return within three or four days at furthest. She would seldom be in any danger, because ships of the line are hardly ever seen in those parts; nor could they be there without being observed.

WHILE one part of the squadron was employed in protecting the navigation of the north; the other, and most considerable part, would cover the other coasts of the colony. This would have its chief station at Port-au-Prince. Two of its vessels might sail from thence to the Mole St. Nicholas, as dangerous a place for ships going from the cape to the west and south, as la Grange for those that want to land at the cape. They should never pass the point of the Mole; the forces stationed to the

northward should endeavour to scour the sea as far as that place; which is the more important, as all the armaments from New England going to Jamaica must be intercepted at this passage they are obliged to make. The Squadron of Port-au-prince should further be commissioned to shew itself now and then to the southward of the island, to protect its own latitudes, and to convoy all homeward-bound ships till they were got clear of the island. It might even occasionally go and cruize upon Jamaica when it could be spared.

HAVING thus provided for the security of the produce of the colony from the attempts of the enemy; it is incumbent on the mother-country to take the necessary measures for preserving so valuable a property.

To put an end to the disputes subsisting between the French and Spaniards at St. Domingo, it would be necessary to fix the limits of both colonies.

IN former times, the Spaniards, who still occupy half the island, were formidable rivals. As soon as the French had made their appearance at St. Domingo, warm contests arose between the two nations. A few private and insignificant men ventured to go to war with a people armed under a regular authority. These men were acknowledged by their country as soon as they were thought strong enough to maintain themselves in their usurpations. A commander was sent to them, who bore the name of governor of Tortuga and St. Domingo; which title was afterwards changed to that of governor-general of the Caribbee islands. The brave man, who was first appointed to command those intrepid adventurers, caught their spirit to such a degree as to propose to his court the conquest

conquest of the whole island. He pledged his life for the success of the undertaking, provided they would send him a squadron strong enough to block up the harbour of the capital.

THE ministry of Versailles, neglecting a project which was in reality more practicable than it appeared to them at a distance, left the French exposed to continual hostilities. Notwithstanding this, they always repulsed them successfully; and even carried devastation into the enemy's country; but those animosities kept up in their minds a spirit of robbery and plunder, indisposed them for useful labours, and stopt the progress of agriculture, which should be the ultimate end of every well-regulated colony, and the first object of every society that is in the possession of lands. The error which France had fallen into, in not seconding the ardour of the new colonists for the conquest of the whole island, had nearly occasioned her the loss of that part of which she was already in possession. While the French were engaged in carrying on the war of 1688, against all Europe, the Spaniards and the English, who both dreaded seeing them firmly established at St. Domingo, united their forces to expel them. Their first attempts gave them reason to expect an entire success; when they quarrelled with each other, and from that time became irreconcilable enemies. Ducasse, who managed the colony with much sagacity and great reputation, took advantage of their divisions to attack them successively. He first invaded Jamaica, where he destroyed every thing with fire

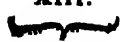
and sword. From thence he was preparing to turn his arms against St. Domingo; and would infallibly have reduced the whole island, had he not been stopped in this expedition by orders from his court.

THE house of Bourbon ascended the throne of Spain, and the French nation lost all hopes of conquering St. Domingo. Hostilities, which had not even been suspended there by the treaties of Aix-la Chapelle, Nimeguen, and Ryswick, ceased at last between people who could never be true friends to each other. The French settlements, and even the planters, recovered their tranquillity. For some time past, their slaves, taking advantage of the national divisions, had shaken off their chains, and removed into a district where they found freedom and no labour. This desertion, which must naturally have increased, was abated, by the Spaniards entering into a contract to bring home the fugitives to their neighbours, for the sum of 250 livres * a head. Although this agreement was not very scrupulously observed, it proved a powerful check till the dissensions that divided the two nations in 1718. At this period the negroes deserted their works in multitudes. This loss induced the French to think of reviving their old project of expelling totally from the island such neighbours, who were equally dangerous from their indolence, as from their turbulent spirit. The war did not last long enough to bring about
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* 10l. 18s. 9d.

this revolution. At the conclusion of the peace, Philip V. gave orders for the restitution of all the fugitives that could be found. They were just embarked, to be sent to their old masters, when the people rose and rescued them; an act which we could hardly disapprove, had they been prompted to it by humanity, rather than by national hatred. It will always be pleasing to see people excited to rebellion on account of the slavery of the miserable negroes. Those who were rescued on this occasion, fled into inaccessible mountains, where they have since multiplied to such a degree, as to be able to afford a safe retreat to all the slaves that can find means to join them. There, in consequence of the cruelty of civilized nations, they become as free and as savage as tigers; in expectation, perhaps, of a chief and a conqueror, who may restore the violated rights of mankind, by seizing upon an island which seems to have been intended for the slaves who till the ground, and not for the tyrants who water it with the blood of those victims.

THE present system of politics will not allow France and Spain to be at war with each other. Should any event occasion a rupture between the two nations, notwithstanding the compact between the two crowns, it would probably be but a transient quarrel, that would not allow time for projecting conquests which must soon be restored. The enterprises on both sides would, therefore, be confined to ravaging the country; and in this case the nation that does not cultivate, at least at

 St. Domingo, would prove formidable, by its very poverty, to that which has already made some progress in the culture of its lands. A Castilian governor was so sensible of this, that he once wrote to the French commandant, that, if he forced him to an invasion, he would destroy more in the compass of one league, than the French could, if they were to lay waste all the country he commanded.

HENCE it is demonstrable, that, if a war should break out in Europe between these two powers, the most active of them ought to sue for a neutrality in favour of this island. Perhaps, it would be for the interest of both, that it should be totally in the hands of the most laborious. But even though the court of Madrid should resolve to relinquish a territory which is rather a burthen to Spain, there are still many difficulties remaining. Great-Britain, who is now mistress of the fate of America, would hardly consent to such an accession of wealth to her rival.

A MORE natural scheme, and which ought to meet with no obstacle, would be to fix the boundaries of the two nations that share St. Domingo. This arrangement ought to have taken place on the accession of Philip V. to the throne; an event which gave the French possessions a degree of stability and legal right they never had before. It might have been expected, that the nation which gave the other a king, should have stipulated that all the territory lying between the coasts they inhabited to the north and south, should remain under their dominion. More powerful interests

then claimed the attention of both parties; and this discussion was reserved for another period, which is never come. Not a single conference has ever been attempted to settle this difficulty. This neglect has been the occasion of much bloodshed among the inhabitants. This source of rage and discord has filled every breast; and at last, in 1730, both nations took up arms to destroy each other. The principal people of both colonies succeeded at that time in putting a stop to this dissension, by a provisional convention; but the successors of those able and moderate men may not always have the same authority, or the same good fortune. The most effectual method would be to put an end for ever to this intestine war, by legally authenticating the respective property of both parties.

To effect this with regularity and justice, it would be proper to go as far back as the year 1700. At this period, both nations being upon friendly terms, remained the just owners of the lands they then possessed. The encroachments made during the course of this century, by the subjects of one of the crowns, are the encroachments of individuals upon each other; they are not become lawful possessors by being tolerated; and the rights of both powers are still the same, since they have not been abrogated, directly or indirectly, by any convention.

BUT it is certain, from incontestable facts, that, in the beginning of this century, the French possessions, which are now bounded on the north by

coast by the river of Massacre, extended then to the river Yague. Those of the southern coast, which had been carried on as far as the point of Cape Beata, have been contracted, in process of time, to the inlet of Pitre. This revolution has been insensibly brought about, and is the natural consequence of the æconomical system of the two neighbouring nations. The one which has applied itself chiefly to agriculture, has collected all its possessions towards the most frequented ports, where the produce might be most readily disposed of. The other, whose subjects were shepherds rather than planters, wanting more room for the breeding of cattle, have seized upon all the forsaken lands. The pastures have naturally been enlarged, and the fields contracted, or at least brought closer together. But it is not reasonable that the most industrious nation, that which does most good to the ground by improving it, should be plundered by the other, which only wanders about and consumes without propagating.

It would not be so easy to fix the boundaries of the French in the inland parts; the frequent and daily revolutions that have happened there, having occasioned much uncertainty and confusion. The two colonies are at present separated by the mountains of Ouanaminthe, of the Trou, of the great river, of the Artibonite, and of the Mirebalai. By this barrier, the French are confined every where, excepting at the points of Mole St. Nicholas and Cape Tiburon, to a narrow tract, which extends no-where more than nine leagues and a half; and

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in some places not above six leagues at most. This territory forms a kind of crescent, whose convexity takes in 250 leagues of sea-coast, to the north, west and south. But these limits cannot subsist, for a reason which must prevail over all other considerations.

THE French settlements to the north, are divided from those to the west and south by inaccessible mountains. The impossibility of succouring them exposes them to the invasion of a power which is equally an enemy to both nations. The common danger, which creates a kind of reciprocal interest, should engage the court of Madrid to settle the limits in such a manner, that her ally may find the assistance she may want for her defence. The land that should be given up is rugged, a very indifferent soil, and at a great distance from the sea. The proprietors of these lands, which are, indeed, uncultivated, but covered with flocks, should be indemnified by France, with a generosity which should leave them no room to regret what they had lost.

WHEN the possessions of the colony are thus connected and supported internally, by an uninterrupted chain of communication, they must be fortified against the attacks of the only enemy that is truly formidable, the English. If they mean to attack St. Domingo by the west or south, they will collect their forces at Jamaica; if by the north, they will make their preparations at Barbadoes, or some other of the windward islands, from whence they may reach the Cape in seven or eight days; whereas

Measures which ought to be taken by France, to protect this colony from foreign invasions.



whereas it would take five or six weeks to come to that port from Jamaica.

THE west and south are incapable of being defended. The immense extent of the tract renders it impossible to maintain any connection or regularity in the motions of the troops. If they are dispersed, they become useless by being thus divided; if they are collected for the defence of such posts as are most liable to be attacked, from the natural weakness of their position, they would be in danger of being all lost together. Large battalions would only be burdensome to such extensive coasts, which present too much flank and too much front to the enemy. It will only be necessary to erect, or keep up, batteries to protect the roads, the merchant-ships, and the coasting-trade; to keep off privateers, and even to prevent the landing of a man of war or two, that might come to ravage the coast, and levy contributions. The light troops, which are sufficient to support these batteries, will give ground in proportion to the advances of the enemy, and only take care to avoid surrendering till they are in danger.

BUT it is not necessary to relinquish every kind of defence. At the back of each coast, there should be a place for shelter and for reinforcements; always open for retreat, out of the enemy's reach, safe from insults, and able to resist their attack. This should be a narrow pass, capable of being intrenched, and of defending the troops to advantage. Such is that of la Gascogne, on the western coast. It has every natural advantage of situation, with

with this only inconvenience, that it is not placed in the center between all the quarters. The general rendezvous for the south, established on the habitation called Perrein, at the distance of 10,000 toises from the Cayes, is a retreat capable of making a very great resistance. In the center of all motions of retreat, it comprehends all that can be wished for as a defence. Nature has provided it with a narrow pass, and at the same time covered its flanks, and left an opening at the back ; which, while it shuts up every avenue against an enemy, secures to those who defend it, a communication with the interior parts of the colony.

BOOK
XIII.

FROM these impregnable retreats, the conqueror may continually be harrassed ; who, having no strong hold, will be perpetually exposed to a surprise. These alarms would be doubled, if a few squadrons of light horse were established there, which might be procured at a small expence. The Spaniards of St. Domingo sell Andalusian horses at a moderate price ; which are very tractable, and yet full of spirit, are unshod, and feed all the year round in the meadows, where they sleep in open air. These are excellent for skirmishes, and will afford sufficient time to wait for succours, which may be brought up at any time from the north. The troops employed in this service may, if wanted, defend the other part of the colony, which can only be attacked by sea.

ALL those who are acquainted with the island of St. Domingo, know, that the French settlements make as it were two distinct colonies, one to
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the south and west, and the other to the north; which have no real and beneficial communication with the continent. So that, even supposing the English were sufficiently strong, had gained a firm establishment in the west and south, they never could penetrate to the north by land. Should they attempt it, it must be by that narrow tract which joins the French possessions on the west and north, at Cape St. Nicholas, or else by crossing the Spanish territories; both which are impracticable.

THE first is a barren desert, so full of forests, passes, and precipices, that a man on foot cannot get through but with much time and extreme labour. The other way is little better. It lies across the Spanish mountains, which are high, barren, and craggy; and whoever should attempt to pass them, must expect to be harrassed. The northern coast, therefore, being inaccessible by land, can only be attacked by sea. As it is richer, more populous, and less extensive than the other two, it is more adapted to support a land war, and to make a regular defence.

THE sea-side, which is more or less full of reefs, affords in many places a swampy ground; and the mangroves which cover these marshes, make them quite impenetrable. This natural defence is not so common as it was, since many of these coppices have been cut away. But the landing places, which are commonly no better than gaps, flanked by these woods overflowed with water, require but a moderate front to stop them up. Magazines, and other stone buildings, are common there; they furnish

nish posts for the erection of battlements, and secure the placing of some masked batteries.

THIS first line of the shore seems to promise, that a coast of eighteen leagues, so well defended by nature, would, when seconded by the valour of the French, put the enemy in danger of being beaten the moment they should land. If their schemes were discovered, or if the dispositions they were making at sea should, from a distance, point out the place of their landing, the forces might repair thither and prevent it. But experience shews the infallible advantage of squadrons at anchor.

It is not only by the firing of broadsides from the ships to cover the approach of boats, it is by the impossibility there is of guarding every part of the coast, that a squadron at anchor can easily effect landing, as it is a constant check to so many places at once. Land forces move very slowly about the windings of the coast, while the boats and sloops arrive speedily by a shorter way. The assailer follows the string, while the other must go all along the bow. Disappointed and wearied out with a variety of motions, the latter is not less apprehensive of those he sees in the day time, than of the manœuvres of the night which he cannot see.

In order to be able to oppose a descent, the first thing to be done is to suppose it actually accomplished; all our courage and strength is then exerted in taking advantage of the delays or mistakes of the enemy. As soon as they are observed at sea;

sea, they may immediately be expected on land. A large shore, on which a landing may be effected, will always leave the plain of the Cape open to invasion; so that the chief attention must be directed, not to the sea-shore, but to the inland parts.

THE inland parts are in general covered with sugar-cans, which being more or less high, according to their degree of maturity, successively make the fields appear so many thickets. These are occasionally set on fire, either to cover a march, or to retard the enemy's pursuit, to deceive or astonish him. In two hours time, instead of fields covered with crops, nothing is to be seen but an immense waste, covered with stubble.

THE partitions of the cane grounds, the savannahs, and the storehouses for provisions, do not obstruct the motions of an army more than our meadows. Instead of our villages, they have their habitations, which are not so full of people, but are more numerous. The thick and strait hedges of citron-trees are closer and more impenetrable than the fences that inclose our fields. This is what constitutes the greatest difference in the view of the fields of America and those of Europe.

A SMALL number of rivers, some hollow-ways, very low hillocks, a soil generally even, some dikes constructed against inundations, few ditches, if any, one or two forests not very thick set with trees, a small number of morasses, a ground that is overflowed in a storm, and grows dusty again with twelve hours sunshine, rivers that are full one day and dried up the next; these are the general appearances

appearances of the plain of the Cape. This diversity must afford advantageous encampments, and it must ever be remembered, that in a defensive war, the post one removes to cannot be too near the one that is quitted.

It is not the province of a writer to prescribe rules to military men. Cæsar himself has told us what he has done, not what we are to do. Topographical descriptions, determining the goodness of such or such a post, the combination of marches, the art of encampments and retreats, the most learned theory; all these must be submitted to the eye of the general, who, with the principles in his mind, and the materials in his hand, applies both to the circumstances of time and place, as they chance to occur. The military genius, though mathematical, is dependent on fortune, which suits the order of the operations to the diversity of appearances. Rules are liable to numberless exceptions, which must be discovered in the instant. The very execution almost always alters the plan, and decomposes the system of an action. The courage or timidity of the troops, the rashness of the enemy, the casual success of his measures, an accidental combat, an unforeseen event, a storm that swells a torrent, a high wind that conceals a snare or an ambuscade under clouds of dust, thunder that frightens the horses, or is confounded with the report of the cannon, the temperature of the air, which constantly influences the spirits of the commander and the blood of the soldiers: all these are so many natural or moral causes, which, by their uncertainty, may overturn the best-concerted projects.

WHATEVER

WHATEVER place is made choice of for a descent at St. Domingo, the town of the cape will always be the object of it. The landing will be somewhere in the bay of the Cape, where the ships will be ready to augment the land-forces with two thirds of their crews, and to furnish them with artillery, ammunition, and whatever they may want for the siege of that opulent fortress. It is towards this bulwark of the colony that all endeavours to keep off the assailer must be directed. The choice of advantageous positions will in some measure compensate for the inequality of numbers. At the moment of landing, the ground must be disputed by supporting a kind of false attack, without engaging the whole of the troops. These must be posted in such a manner as to secure two retreats, the one towards the Cape, to form the garrison of that place, the other in the narrow passes of the mountains, where they will keep an intrenched camp, from whence they may annoy the besiegers, and retard the taking of the place. Should the place surrender, as it would be an easy matter to favour the evasion of the troops when they evacuate it, the conquest would not yet be completed. The mountains in which they would take refuge, inaccessible to an army, surround the plain with a double or treble chain, and guard the inhabited parts, by very narrow passes, which may be easily defended. The principal of these is the defile of the great river, where the enemy would find two or three passes of the river, that reach from one mountain

tain to the other. In this place four or five hundred men would stop the most numerous army, by only sinking the bed of the waters. This resistance might be seconded by 25,000 inhabitants, both white and black, who are settled in these vallies. As the white men are more numerous here than upon the richer lands, and their crops are smaller, they cannot afford to consume any great quantity of the produce of Europe, so that what they cultivate is chiefly for their own subsistence; from this they might easily supply the troops that should defend their country. Any deficiency in the article of fresh meat could be made up by the Spaniards, who breed vast quantities of cattle on the backs of these mountains.

AFTER all, it may happen that the firmness of the troops may be sunk under the want of provisions or warlike stores, and they may be either forced or turned back. This suggested the idea some years ago at Versailles, of building a fortified town in the center of the mountains. Marshal Noailles was a warm advocate for this scheme. It was then imagined, that by means of some redoubts of earth scattered upon different parts of the coast, the enemy might be inticed by regular attacks, and insensibly exhausted by the loss of a great number of men, in a climate where sickness suddenly proves more destructive than the sword. It was suggested that no more strong holds should be erected on the frontiers, where they lie exposed to the invasion of the masters of the sea; because,

while they are unable to defend their own habitations, they become so many bulwarks for the conquerors, who can easily take and guard them with their ships, and depose or draw from thence arms and men to intimidate the vanquished. An entirely open country was better, in their opinion, for a power that has no maritime strength, than forces dispersed and forsaken upon shores, wasted and depopulated by the inclemency of the climate.

It was in the center of the island that the strongest place of defence was expected to be made. A road of twenty or thirty leagues, full of obstacles; where every march must be attended with several engagements, in which the advantage of the posts would render a detachment formidable to a whole army; where the removing of the artillery would be tedious and laborious; where the difficulty of convoys, and the distance of communication with the ocean; where every thing, in short, would conspire to destroy the enemy: such was to be, as it were, the glacis of the intended fortification. This capital was to stand upon high ground, where the air is more pure and temperate than in the plains beneath; in the midst of a country which would supply the town with necessaries, particularly rice; surrounded with flocks and herds, which, feeding upon a soil most favourable to their increase, would be reserved for times of want; provided with store-houses proportioned to the town and garrison: such a city would have changed the colony into a

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kingdom,

kingdom, able to support itself for a long time ; whereas its present opulence does but weaken it, and having superfluities without necessities, it enriches a few proprietors, without affording them sustenance.

IF the enemy had made themselves masters of the sea-coast, which would not be disputed with them, and were desirous of collecting the produce of the lands, they would stand in need of whole armies to keep merely upon the defensive ; for the continual excursions from the center would not permit them to do more than this. The troops in the inland parts of the island, always sure of a respectable retreat, might easily be relieved by recruits from Europe ; which would find no difficulty in penetrating to the center of a circle of so immense a circumference ; whereas all the English fleets would not be sufficient to fill up the vacancies which the climate would be continually making in their garrisons.

NOTWITHSTANDING the evidence of these advantages, the project of a fortification in the mountains has been dropt, and a system pursued, which would confine the whole defence of the island to the mole of St. Nicholas. This new plan could not fail of being applauded by the planters, who were not fond of citadels and garrisons near their plantations, as they are more injurious than they can possibly be beneficial to them. They are sensible, that the whole force being directed to one point, they should have none but light troops left in their

neighbourhood on the three coasts, which are sufficient to drive away the privateers by the assistance of their batteries; and are, besides, very convenient defenders, ever ready to yield without resistance, and to disperse or capitulate on the least intimation of an invasion.

THIS plan, so favourable to private interest, has also met with the approbation of some persons well versed in military affairs. They were of opinion, that the few troops which the colony will admit of, being in a manner lost in so large an island as St. Domingo, would make an appearance at the Mole. Bombardopolis is the place that has been chosen, as the most respectable post. This new city stands on the margin of a plain, which is sufficiently elevated to render it cool and temperate. Its territory is covered with a natural savannah, and adorned with groves of palm-trees of various kinds. It is not overlooked; which is an uncommon circumstance at St. Domingo. It might be made a regular fortification, and of any degree of strength. If it did not prevent an invasion, it would, at least, prevent the conquerors from getting a firm establishment upon the coasts.

It were to be wished, say the statesmen, that, from the first moment the works had been begun at the Mole, it had at the same time been fortified to the degree that so advantageous a situation will admit of. It is a treasure, the possession of which should have been secured as soon as it was discovered. Should this valuable key of St. Domingo,

mingo, and, indeed, of all America, fall into the hands of the English; which it may very possibly do on the breaking out of a war, which cannot be far off, this Gibraltar of America would be more fatal to France and Spain than even that of Europe.

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It is no wonder, if all the precautions which have been taken hitherto for the defence of St. Domingo, have been conducted with so little judgment. As long as forecast and protection shall be confined to secondary means, which can only protract, not prevent, the conquest of this island, no invariable plan can be pursued. Fixed principles are the exclusive privilege of such powers as can depend upon their naval force, to prevent the loss of, or secure the recovery of, their colonies. Those of France are not guarded by those floating arsenals, which can at the same time attack and defend. Their mother-country is not yet possessed of such a navy as to render her formidable. But does she at least govern her possessions abroad by the maxims of sound policy and good order? This is what we shall next inquire into.

THE British government, ever actuated by the national spirit, which seldom deviates from the true interests of the state, has carried into the new world that right of property which is the ground-work of her legislation. From a conviction, that man never thinks he has the entire possession of any thing but what he has lawfully acquired; they have, indeed, sold the lands in the islands at a very moderate price to such as were willing to

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clear them. This appeared the surest way to hasten the cultivation of them ; and to prevent partialities and jealousies, the necessary consequences of a distribution guided by caprice or favour.

FRANCE has taken a method seemingly more generous, but not so prudent, that of granting lands to all who applied for them. No regard was paid to their abilities or circumstances ; the interest of their patrons determined the extent of the land they obtained. Indeed, it was stipulated, that they should begin their settlements within a year after the grant, and not discontinue the clearing of the ground, upon pain of forfeiture. But, besides the hardship of requiring those men to be at the expence of clearing the land, who could not afford to purchase, the penalty fell upon them only, who not having the advantage of family and fortune, could not make interest with the great ; or upon minors, who being left destitute by the death of their parents, ought rather to have been assisted by the public ; whereas every proprietor who was well recommended or supported, was not called to account, though he let his grounds lie fallow.

To this partiality, which evidently retarded the progress of the colonies, we may add a number of ill-judged regulations relative to domestic life. First, it was required of every person who obtained a grant of land, to plant 500 trenches of manioc for every slave he had upon his plantation. This order was equally detrimental both to private and public interest, as it compelled the planter to en-
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cumber his ground with this ordinary production, when it was able to yield richer crops; and rendered the poor grounds, which were only fit for this kind of culture, useless. This double error could not but lessen the growth of all kinds of commodities; and, indeed, this law, which laid a restraint upon the disposal of property, has never been strictly put in execution; but as it has also never been repealed, it still remains a scourge in the hand of any ignorant, capricious, or passionate minister, who may chuse to make use of it against the inhabitants. This evil, great as it is, is, however, the least of those they have to complain of from administration. The restraint of the Agrarian laws is still increased by the burden of the labours imposed upon the vassals.

THERE was a time in Europe, that of the feudal government, when gold and silver was little regarded in public or private transactions. The nobles served the state, not with their purses, but with their persons; and those of their vassals, who were their property by right of conquest, paid them a kind of quit-rent or homage, either in the fruits of the earth, or in so much labour. These customs, so destructive to men and lands, tended to perpetuate that barbarity to which they owed their rise. But at length they were gradually laid aside, as the authority of kings prevailed in overthrowing the independence and tyranny of the great, by restoring freedom to the people. The prince, now become the sole master, abolished, as a magistrate, some abuses arising from the right of

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war, which destroys every other right. But several of these usurpations, which time had consecrated, were still retained. That of the average, or a certain proportion of labour required of the vassals, has been kept up in some states, where the nobles have lost almost every advantage, though the people have not acquired any. The liberty of France is at this day infringed by this public bondage; and this injustice has been reduced into a system, as if to give it a colour of justice. The consequences of this horrid system have been still more severely felt in the colonies. The culture of these lands, from the nature of the climate and of the productions, requiring expedition, cannot easily spare a number of hands to be sent to a great distance, and employed in public works, which are often useless, and should never be carried on but by idle hands. If the mother-country, with all the various means she can employ, has never yet been able to correct or mitigate the hardships of these services, she ought to consider what evils must result from them beyond the seas, where the direction of these works is committed to two overseers, who can neither be directed, censured, nor controuled, in the arbitrary exercise of absolute power. But the burden of these services is light, when compared with that of the taxes.

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A TAX may be defined to be a contribution towards public expence, necessary for the preservation of private property. The peaceable enjoyment of lands and revenues requires a proper force

force to defend them from invasion, and a police that secures the liberty of improving them. Whatever is paid towards the maintenance of public order, is right and just; whatever is levied beyond this, is extortion. Now, all the government expences which the mother-country is at for the colonies, are repaid her by the restraint laid upon them, to cultivate for her alone, and in such a manner as is best adapted to her wants. This subjection is the most burdensome of all tributes, and ought to exempt them from all other taxes.

ANY one must be convinced of this truth, who reflects on the difference of situation between the old world and the new. In Europe, subsistence and home consumption are the principal object of culture and of manufactures; exportation only carries off the overplus. In the islands, the whole is to be exported. There life and property are equally precarious.

IN Europe, war only deprives the manufacturer and the husbandman of the trade to foreign countries; they still have their resource in that which circulates in the internal part of the kingdom. In the islands, hostilities annihilate every thing; there are no more sales, no more purchases, no more circulation; the planter hardly recovers his costs.

IN Europe, the owner of a small estate, who is able to make only a few expences, improves his land as much in proportion as he that has a wide domain and immense treasures. In the islands, the improvement of the smallest plantation requires a pretty good stock to begin with.

IN Europe, it is commonly one citizen that is indebted to another; and the state is not impoverished by these private debts. Those of the islands are of a different nature. Many planters, in order to carry on the labour of clearing their grounds, and to repair the losses incurred by the misfortunes of war, which had put a stop to their exports, have been obliged to borrow such large sums, that they may be considered rather as farming the trade, than as proprietors of the plantations.

Whether these reflections have not occurred to the French ministry, or whether particular circumstances have obliged them to depart from their plan; certain it is, they have added fresh taxes to the obligation already laid on the colonies to draw all their necessaries from France, and to send thither all their own commodities. Every negro has been taxed. In some settlements, this poll-tax has been confined to the working blacks; in others, it was laid on all the slaves without distinction. Both these arrangements have been opposed by the colony assembled at St. Domingo. Let us now judge of the force of their arguments.

CHILDREN, old and infirm men, make up about one third of the slaves. Far from being useful to the planter, some of them are only a burden, which humanity alone can prompt him to support, while the rest can afford him but distant and uncertain hopes. It is difficult to conceive how the treasury should have thought of taxing an object that is already chargeable to the owner.

THE poll-tax upon blacks extends beyond the grave ; that is to say, it is fixed upon a person who exists no more. If a slave should die after the assessment has been made, the planter, who is already unhappy on account of the diminution of his income and of his capital, is still obliged to pay a tax, which reminds him of his losses, and makes him feel them more sensibly.

EVEN the working slaves are not an exact tariff of the appraisement of a planter's income. With a few negroes, a good soil will yield more than a poor one with a great number. The commodities are not all of the same value, though they are all procured by the labour of those persons upon whom the tax is equally laid. The changing from one kind of culture to another, which the ground requires, suspends for a while the produce of labour. Droughts, inundations, fires, devouring insects, often destroy the fruits of labour. Suppose all things alike, a less number of hands makes in proportion a less quantity of sugar ; either because the whole of the wants must be taken into consideration, or because labour is truly advantageous so far only as the most favourable opportunities can be improved.

THE poll-tax upon blacks becomes still more oppressive in time of war. A planter who cannot then dispose of his commodities, and must run in debt to support himself and to keep up his land, is further obliged to pay a tax for slaves whose labour will hardly be equivalent to their maintenance. Nay, he is often constrained to send them

at a distance from his plantation for the imaginary wants of the colony, to support them there at his own expence, and to see them perish without any reason, while he is under the severe necessity of replacing them one time or other, if ever he means to retrieve his wasted and almost ruined lands.

THE burden of the poll-tax was still heavier upon such of the proprietors as were absent from the colony, for these were condemned to pay the tax treble; which was the more unjust, as it was matter of indifference to France whether her commodities were consumed at home or in the islands. Could it be her intention to hinder the emigration of the colonists? But it is only by the mildness of the government that citizens can be induced to fix in a country, not by prohibitions and penalties. Besides, men who by hazardous labours carried on in a sultry climate, had contributed to the public prosperity, ought to have been indulged in the liberty of ending their days in the temperate regions of the mother-country. Nothing could more effectually rouse the ambition and activity of numbers of idle people, than to be spectators of their fortune; and the state might thus be relieved of the load of these useless men, to the profit of industry and commerce.

NOTHING can be more detrimental to both than this taxing of the blacks, as the necessity of selling obliges the planter to lower the price of his commodities. A moderate price may be an advantageous circumstance, when it is the result of great plenty, and of a very quick circulation. But it is
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ruinous to be obliged to lose constantly upon one's merchandise, in order to pay taxes. The profits of trade are all absorbed by the treasury, which is continually receiving, without making any returns.

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LASTLY, it is a very difficult matter to levy this tax. Every proprietor must give in an annual account of the number of his slaves. To prevent false entries, they must be verified by clerks, or excisemen. Every negro that is not entered must be forfeited; which is a very absurd practice, because every labouring negro is so much stock, and by the forfeiture of him the culture is diminished, and the very object for which the duty was laid, is annihilated. Thus it happens that in the colonies, where the success of every thing depends upon the tranquillity which is enjoyed, a destructive war is carried on between the financier and the planter. Law-suits are numerous, removals frequent, rigorous measures become necessary, and the costs are great and ruinous.

If the negro-tax is unjust in its extent, unequal in its repartition, and complicate in the mode of levying it; the tax laid upon the commodities that are carried out of the colonies, is nearly as injudicious. The government ventured to impose this duty, from a persuasion that it would fall entirely upon the consumer and the merchant; but there cannot be a more dangerous error in political œconomy than this is.

THE act of consuming does not supply money to buy what is consumed; this must be gained by labour; and all labour, if things are traced up to their

their origin, is, in fact, paid by the first proprietor out of the produce of the earth. This being the case, no one article can be always growing dearer, but all the rest must rise in proportion. In this situation, there is no profit to be made upon any of them. If this equilibrium between the articles of commerce be removed, the consumption of the advanced article will decrease; and, if it decrease, the price will fall of course, and the dearth will have been only transient.

THE merchant can no more take the duty upon him, than the consumer. He may, indeed, advance it once or twice; but if he cannot make a natural and necessary profit upon the commodities so taxed, he will soon discontinue that branch of trade. To hope that competition will force him to take the payment of the duty out of his profits, is to suppose that they were exorbitant; and that the competition, which was then insufficient, will become more considerable when the profits are less. If, on the other hand, things were as they ought to be, and the profits no more than necessary, it is supposing that the competition will subsist, though the profits that gave rise to it subsist no longer. We must admit all these absurdities, or allow that it is the planter in the islands who pays the duty, whether it be levied from the first, second, or hundredth hand.

FAR from thus burthening the cultivation of the colonies with taxes, it ought to be encouraged by liberalities; since by the state of restraint in which trade is kept, these liberalities, with all
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the advantages arising from them, must necessarily return to the mother-country.

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IF the situation of a state, that is in arrears on account of losses or mismanagement, will not admit of liberalities, or easing the subjects of their burthens, the payment of the taxes in the colonies themselves might, at least, be suppressed, and the produce of them levied at home. This would be the next best system that could be pursued, and would be equally agreeable to the old and new world.

NOTHING is so pleasing to an American, as to remove from his sight every thing that denotes his dependence. Wearied with the importunities of collectors, he abhors standing taxes, and dreads the increase of them. He in vain seeks for that liberty which he thought to have found at the distance of two thousand leagues from Europe. He disdains a yoke which pursues him through the storms of the ocean. Discontented, and inwardly repining at the restraint he still feels, he thinks with indignation on his native country; which, under the name of mother, calls for his blood, instead of feeding him. Remove the image of his chains from his sight; let his riches pay their tribute to the mother-country only at landing there, and he will fancy himself free and privileged; though at the same time, by lowering the value of his own commodities, and enhancing the price of those that come from Europe, he, in fact, ultimately bears the load of a tax of which he is ignorant.

NAVIGATORS will also find an advantage in paying duty only upon goods that have reached the place of their destination in their full value and without any risque, and will restore the capital of their stock along with the profits. They will not then have the mortification of having purchased of the prince the very hazards of shipwreck, and of losing a cargo for which they had paid duty at embarking. Their ships, on the contrary, will bring back, in merchandise, the amount of the duty; and the productions being advanced in value about twenty-one per cent. by exportation, the duty will hardly be felt.

LASTLY, the consumer himself will be a gainer by it; because, the colonist and the merchant cannot benefit by any regulation, of which in time the consumer will not experience the good effects. All the taxes will no sooner be reduced to a single one, but trade will be clogged with fewer formalities, fewer delays, fewer charges, and consequently the commodities can be sold at a more reasonable rate.

EVEN the state itself might find a considerable political advantage in this. By this new arrangement, there would be a country, apparently exempt from all taxes, and enjoying absolute liberty. Such an event would be the more remarkable, at a time when the English colonies groan under the burthen of fresh taxes. The contrast would aggravate their sufferings; their murmurs and their audacity would know no bounds; they would learn to place some confidence in a government which they have

hitherto accused of being tyrannical; and in case of a revolt in North-America, that vast region would be less afraid of putting itself under the protection of France.

THIS system of moderation, which every thing seems to point out as the fittest, will be easily introduced. All the productions of the islands are subject, at their entry into the kingdom, to a duty known by the name of *Domaine d'Occident*, or western domain, which is fixed at three and a half per cent. by two sols * per livre. The value of these productions, which is the rule for the payment of the duty, is determined in the months of January and July. It is fixed at twenty, or five and twenty per cent. below the real price. The western office allows, besides, a more considerable tare than the seller in trade does. Add to this duty that which the commodities pay at the custom-houses of the colonies, which produces nearly the same, and those that are paid in the inland parts of the islands; and we shall have the whole of the revenue which the government draws from the settlements in America.

IF this fund were confounded with the other revenues of the state, we might be apprehensive that it was not applied to its destination, which should be solely the protection of the islands. The unforeseen exigencies of the royal treasury would infallibly divert it into another channel. There are some moments when the critical state of the disease will not admit of calculating the inconveniences of

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the remedy. The most urgent necessity engrosses all the attention. Nothing then is secured from the hand of arbitrary power, urged by the wants of the present moment. The ministry is continually drawing out of the treasury, under the delusive hopes of replacing in a short time what they have received ; but the execution of this design is perpetually retarded by fresh demands.

HENCE it appears, that it would be highly necessary that the chest, destined for the duties on the productions of the colonies, should be kept wholly separate from that destined to receive the revenues of the kingdom. The sums deposited there, as in trust, would always be ready to answer the demands of those settlements. The colonist who always has stock to send over to Europe, would gladly give it for bills of exchange, when he was once assured that they would meet with no delays or difficulties in the payment of them. This kind of bank would soon create another means of communication between the mother-country and the islands ; the court would be better acquainted with the state of its affairs in these distant countries, and would recover the credit it has long since lost ; but which is of the utmost consequence, especially in time of war. We shall now put an end to our discussions on taxes, and consider the regulations respecting the militia.

Is the militia well regulated in the French islands ? ..

THE French islands, like those of other nations, had no regular troops at first. The adventurers, who had conquered them, looked upon the right of defending themselves as a privilege ; and the descen-

descendents of those intrepid men thought themselves sufficiently strong to guard their own possessions. They had nothing, indeed, to do but to repulse a few vessels, which landed some sailors and soldiers, as undisciplined as themselves.

THE situation of affairs has, indeed, undergone an alteration. As these settlements became more considerable, it was to be expected that they would, sooner or later, be attacked by numerous European fleets and armies; and this made it necessary to send them other defenders. The event has shewn the insufficiency of a few scattered battalions, to oppose the land and sea forces of England. The colonists themselves have been convinced that their own efforts could never prevent a revolution; and fearing that a fruitless resistance would only exasperate a victorious enemy, they were more inclined to capitulate than to fight. Having become political calculators, their weakness made them sensible that they were unfit for military operations, and they have contributed their money in order to be discharged from a service, which, though glorious in its principle, had degenerated into a burthenome servitude. The militia was suppressed in 1764.

THIS act of compliance has been applauded by those who only considered this institution as the means of preserving the colonies from all foreign invasions. They very sensibly imagined, that it was unreasonable to require that men, who were grown old under the hardships of a scorching climate, in order to raise a large fortune, should expose

pose themselves to the same dangers as those poor victims of our ambition, who are perpetually hazarding their lives for five-pence a day. Such a sacrifice has appeared to them too unreasonable to expect it should be complied with ; and the ministry, who saw the impropriety of keeping up such a vain and burthensome service, and therefore discontinued it, have been commended.

THOSE who are better acquainted with the American settlements, have not judged so favourably of this innovation. The militia, say they, is necessary to preserve the interior police of the islands ; to prevent the revolt of the slaves ; to check the incursions of the fugitive negroes ; to hinder the banditti from assembling in troops ; to protect the navigation along the coasts, and to keep off the privateers. If the inhabitants are not embodied ; if they have neither commanders nor standards, which of them will march to the assistance of his neighbours ? There is no one to warn him of his danger, no one to command him ; and that harmony and uniformity of action, without which nothing can be carried on with propriety, will totally be interrupted.

THESE reflections, which, though striking and natural, had at first escaped the court of Versailles, have soon produced an alteration in their conduct. They restored the militia with greater expedition than they had abolished it. As early as the year 1766, the windward islands submitted to it without any great resistance, though an opposition might have been expected from the continuance of the

the new taxes, when their object no longer subsisted. St. Domingo warmly expostulated against this abuse of an authority, which was too hasty and too inconstant in the measures it adopted, not to excite murmurings.

A PHILOSOPHICAL administrator, who was witness to the opposition which the re-establishment of a forced militia met with from the inhabitants of St. Domingo, proposed to make it voluntary. He made no doubt but that the prospect of glory or fortune would have induced half the colony, whose example would have influenced the other half, to solicit as an honour what they abhorred as a yoke. But this expedient, ingenious as it was, and effectual as it might have been, was improper, because it would have affected that uniformity which ought to subsist between islands that are under the same government. Such a distinction would have laid the foundation of jealousies and divisions; which would, sooner or later, have proved fatal to the colonies, if not to the mother-country itself.

WITHOUT any of these political artifices, the people of St. Domingo have resumed the military service. Indeed, it has been with aversion and reluctance, founded upon grievances which cannot be too soon redressed. It is well known, that a militia is a great restraint upon civil liberty; which they are more jealous of in the colonies than we are in Europe, where authority universally prevails. It exposes the citizen to numberless vexations. The evils it has occasioned have excited a detestation

for this kind of servitude, which none but tyrants or slaves can be surpris'd at. It is necessary, if possible, to eradicate the impressions of the past, and remove all mistrust for the future. The condescension and moderation of government must put an end to the apprehensions of the colonies, by making all those alterations in the form of the militia, which are consistent with its object; which is, to maintain public order and safety. The welfare of the people is the great end of all authority. If the actions of the sovereign do not tend to this end, his existence will be supported only by the assistance of money, or the sanction of old records, which time will destroy, or posterity despise. In vain does flattery raise numberless and magnificent monuments to princes; the hand of man erects them, but it is the heart that consecrates them, and affection that renders them immortal. Without this, public trophies are only a proof of the meanness of the people, not of the greatness of the ruler. There is one statue in Paris, the sight of which makes every heart exult with sentiments of affection. Every eye is turned with complacency towards this image of paternal and popular goodness. The tears of the distressed silently call upon it under the hardships of oppression. Men secretly bless the hero it immortalizes. All voices unite to celebrate his memory after two centuries are elapsed. His name is in veneration to the uttermost parts of America. In every heart he protests against the abuses of authority; he declares against the usurpations of the rights of the people; he promises the

subjects the redress of their grievances, and an increase of prosperity ; and demands both of the ministry.

It is scarce credible, that a law, seemingly dictated by nature ; a law which occurs instantly to every just and good man ; which leaves no doubt in the mind as to its rectitude and utility ; it is scarce credible, that such a law should sometimes be prejudicial to the preservation of society, stop the progress of colonies, divert them from the end of their destination, and gradually pave the way to their ruin. Strange as it may seem, this law is no other than the equal division of estates among children or co-heirs. This law, so consonant to nature, should be abolished in America.

Is the regulation of inheritance since properly settled in the French islands ?

THIS division was necessary at the first formation of colonies. Immense tracts of lands were to be cleared. This could not be done without people ; nor could men who had quitted their own country for want, be any otherwise fixed in those distant and desert regions, than by assigning them a property. Had the government refused to grant them lands, they would have wandered about from one place to another ; they would have begun to establish various settlements, and have had the disappointment to find, that none of them would attain to that degree of prosperity as to become useful to the mother-country.

BUT since inheritances, too extensive at first, have in process of time been reduced by a series of successions, and by the sub-divisions of shares, to

such a compass as renders them fit to facilitate cultivation; since they have been so limited as not to lie fallow for want of hands proportionable to their extent, a further division of lands would again reduce them to nothing. In Europe, an obscure man who has but a few acres of land, will make that little estate more advantageous to him in proportion, than an opulent man will the immense property he is possessed of, either by inheritance or chance. In America, the nature of the productions, which are very valuable, the uncertainty of the crops, which are but few in their kind; the quantity of slaves, of cattle, of utensils necessary for a plantation; all this requires a large stock, which they have not in some, and will soon want in all the colonies, if the lands are parcelled out and divided more and more by hereditary successions.

If a father leaves an estate of 30,000 livres * a year, and this estate is equally divided between three children, they will all be ruined if they make three distinct plantations; the one, because he has been made to pay too much for the buildings, and because he has too few negroes, and too little land in proportion; the other two, because they must build before they can begin upon the culture of their land. They will all be equally ruined, if the whole plantation remains in the hands of one of the three. In a country where a creditor is in a worse state than any other man, estates have risen to an immoderate value. The possessor of the whole will

* 1312l. 10s.

will be very fortunate if he is obliged to pay no more for interest than the net produce of the plantation. Now, as the primary law of our nature is the procuring of subsistence, he will begin by procuring that without paying his debts. These will accumulate, and he will soon become insolvent; and the confusion consequent upon such a situation, will end in the ruin of the whole family.

THE only way to remedy these disorders, is to abolish the equality of the division of land. In this enlightened age, government should see the necessity of letting the colonies be more stocked with things than with men. The wisdom of the legislature will, doubtless, find out some compensation for those it has injured, and in some measure sacrificed to the welfare of the community. They ought to be placed upon fresh lands, and to subsist by their own labour. This is the only way to maintain this sort of men; and their industry would open a fresh source of wealth to the state.

AT the conclusion of the peace, a favourable opportunity offered itself for making the proposed alteration in St. Lucia and Guiana. The French ought not to have neglected this opportunity, perhaps the only one that will offer to repeal the law relating to the division of estates, by distributing to those whose expectations they had frustrated, such lands as they intended to cultivate; and by giving them those considerable sums that have been expended to no purpose, as the necessary advance for carrying on the cultivation. Men inured to the climate, acquainted with the only kind of culture that could
possibly

possibly be thought of, encouraged by the example, assistance, and advice of their own families, and aided by the slaves with which government would have supplied them, were much fitter for this purpose than a set of profligate men, collected from the refuse of Europe, and were much more likely to raise the new colonies to that pitch of wealth and prosperity which might be expected. Unfortunately we were not aware, that the first colonies in America must have increased by slow degrees and of themselves, with the loss of a great many men, or by extraordinary exertions of bravery and patience, because they had no competition to support; but that the succeeding settlements could only be formed by the natural means of population, as an old swarm begets a new one. The overflowings of population in one island must spread into another; and the superfluities of a rich colony furnish necessities to an infant settlement. This is the natural order which good policy points out to maritime and commercial powers. All other methods are irrational and destructive. Though the court of Versailles has overlooked this plain principle, productive of so much good; this is no reason why they should reject the proposal of putting a stop to the further division of lands. If the necessity of such a law be evident, it must be enacted, though the present time be less favourable than that which has been neglected. When the plantations are restored to their state of prosperity, by the suppression of that division of land, which precludes every means of improvement, the
planters

planters may then be compelled to clear themselves of the debts with which their plantations are now oppressed.

THE French islands, like all others in America, can only be cultivated by blacks. The climate lays them under a necessity of purchasing labourers. To procure them, they must have capitals; and the first inhabitants had none. They raised them by trade, which therefore gave these valuable settlements their first existence. This kind of assistance, which, perhaps, has been since too easily granted, has involved them in debts, which have increased as they have proceeded in clearing a greater extent of land.

Has the payment of debts contracted in the French islands been judiciously provided for?

THE equality of partition between the several heirs, has raised up creditors within the colonies, as there were already without. As the colonies grew richer, their credit increased in proportion to the multiplicity of divisions. When the population increased to such a degree, that the number of colonists exceeded that of plantations, the superfluous numbers then remaining unemployed became creditors to estates they did not occupy, and were therefore not only useless, but even burthensome to cultivation. We have just pointed out a method of preventing entirely the necessity of this credit within the islands; but in what manner shall the debts contracted abroad be discharged?

WE are told that the planters should spend but a part of their income, and reserve the rest for the fulfilling of their engagements. But it is not considered that those who could afford to make these

these savings, are the people who are not in debt; whereas the debtors have such a scanty income, that they cannot possibly save any thing. Besides, nothing would be more unreasonable than to introduce this system of œconomy into the colonies. As the value of their produce is entirely owing to exchange, and as in this case the exchange would be in a manner annihilated, because it would be confined to cheap articles of mere necessity; the Americans would either be obliged to raise but few of their own commodities, or to sell them for a trifle. Should the mother country be willing to make up in money the deficiencies in the sale of their merchandise, then all the gold that is drawn from one part of America would return to the other. There is a power, known by the superiority of its naval force, which, after ten years of such a trade, would be sure of finding in these islands a compensation for any war it might undertake; and it would be highly impolitic for France to invite that power to attack her settlements abroad.

TRADERS are no less interested than the government in the perpetuity of debts. The colonies were first established upon credit. When the first cultivators had cleared themselves, the loan has been renewed to their successors; and the present possessors still enjoy the same benefit. If they were compelled to pay off this loan, it might soon be done, but culture would suffer by it; and though it might not, possibly, degenerate, yet it would be deprived of the first fruits of virgin lands,
which

which are always most fertile. Traders would then find fewer commodities to buy in the islands; they would have less demand for slaves, utensils, and all other articles necessary for new settlements, and which are almost as considerable as those which are requisite for the wants or luxury of the plantations already formed. In process of time their transactions would be still more reduced. It is well known how reluctantly they see the rich planter accustom himself to send his own productions to Europe, to draw the articles of his own consumption from thence, and reduce his agents to the bare profits of commission. If that dependence which is a necessary consequence of debts, should cease, it would no longer be a few planters, but the whole colony, that would make their own purchases and sales in the mother-country: they would all become traders, and even would soon have no competitors; because they alone would be acquainted with the measure of their own wants.

CREDIT therefore is evidently the basis of all useful connections between the merchants of France and her colonies; and to restore their stock, would be in effect to deprive them of their profits. Unreasonably have they complained for these forty years past, that they are absolutely ruined by the delays they experience in the payments; the fortunes that have been made in the ports of France, by their intercourse with the islands, are a proof of the injustice of these complaints.

POLITICAL utility, or even the necessity of the colony's being in debt to the mother-country, can, however,

however, by no means cancel the obligation every private man is under to fulfil his engagements. Though evil may be the effect, frequently even the cause of good; yet the man who commits it cannot on that account be justified or excused. It is a matter of indifference to the state, whether a certain mass of wealth is in such or such hands; but it can never be conducive to the public welfare that any man should think himself at liberty not to pay his debts. The treasury itself, if it is under any engagements, must clear itself consistently with the principles of justice. A public bankruptcy of the state is infamous; still more prejudicial to the morals of society than to the fortunes of individuals. A time will come, when all these iniquities shall be summoned before the tribunal of nations, and when the power which has committed them shall be judged by its victims. The debts of America, therefore, ought to be paid; but it must be done imperceptibly, and not by sudden or violent measures. While the old debts are paying off, new ones will be contracted, which will perpetuate, as it were, that chain of dependence that links the fortunes of Europe with those of the colonies. It is by judicial means that the creditors of the trade of the islands are to be satisfied. True justice is ever uniform in itself; its favours and punishments are equally shewn to all. If the execution of it is committed to the arbitrary will of those who govern, as it has hitherto been in the colonies, it necessarily degenerates into tyranny. It is oftentimes a hardship upon debtors, who are compelled

to break the most sacred engagements, in order to fulfil the most trifling, and to sacrifice part of their income, and sometimes of their stock, by sales made at an improper season, and without any of the proper forms. It is often unjust for the creditors themselves. It is neither the oldest, nor he that has most right, nor yet he that wants it most, who is first paid: it is the most powerful, the best patronized, the most active, the most violent; whereas the law only ought to decide.

THAT law which, in the colonies, allows of the actual seizure of the plantations, is impracticable. A proof of it is, that no man has ever yet had recourse to it, though there have always been dishonest debtors in the islands, and clamorous creditors, who would not have neglected this mode of recovery if it could have been pursued with success.

THE method of personal seizure, which some have proposed to substitute to the seizure of goods and chattels, would not be more effectual. It would be no easy matter to arrest a planter surrounded with a multitude of slaves, upon a plantation standing by itself. His imprisonment would prove as ruinous to his creditors as to himself. His negroes would grow riotous in his absence; they would cease to work, but go and plunder the neighbouring plantations. But might not the negroes of a debtor be seized and sold? Then the slaves who should cease to work upon one plantation would be employed upon another, and the colony not injured.

THIS expedient is only a specious one, and we must know but little of the character of the negroes

rections of the ship it is fastened to. It will, perhaps, be objected, that the people in those remote islands being continually renewed by the fluctuation of commerce, this will naturally bring in a number of worthless men; and that it will be long before we can expect to see those manners and that sagacity among them, which will be productive of public spirit, and of that dignity which is requisite to support the weight of affairs and the interests of a nation. This objection might have some foundation if we attended merely to the character of those Europeans who are driven to America by their wants or their vices; who, by thus transporting themselves, either by choice or from other motives, are strangers every where; commonly corrupted by the want of laws, ill supplied by an arbitrary police; by that depraved taste for dominion, which results from the abuse of slavery; and by the dazzling lustre of a great fortune, which makes them forget their former obscurity. But this class of men ought to have no share in the administration, which should be wholly committed to proprietors, mostly born in the colonies; for justice is the natural consequence of property; and none are more interested in the good government of a country, than those who are entitled by their birth to the largest possessions in it. These creoles, who have naturally a great share of penetration, a frankness of character, an elevation of soul, and a certain love of justice that arises from these valuable dispositions, would be so sensible of the marks of esteem and confidence which would be shewn them

them by the mother-country, in intrusting them with the interior management of their own, that they would grow fond of that fertile soil, take a pride in improving it, and be happy in introducing all the comforts of a civilized society. Instead of that antipathy to France, which is a reflection upon her ministers, and upbraids them with their severity, we should see in the colonies that attachment which paternal kindness always inspires to children. Instead of that secret eagerness which, in time of war, makes them readily submit to a foreign yoke, we should see them uniting their efforts to prevent or repulse an invasion. Fear will restrain men under the immediate eye of a powerful and formidable master; but affection alone can command them at a distance. This is, perhaps, the only spring that acts upon the frontier provinces of an extensive kingdom; while the indolent and rapacious inhabitants of the metropolis are kept in awe by authority. Attachment to the sovereign is a principle which cannot be too much encouraged, or too much extended; but, if it is neither merited nor returned, he will not enjoy it long. No more joy will then appear in public festivals, no transports of exultation, no involuntary acclamations will be heard at the sight of the beloved idol. Curiosity will bring a throng wherever there is a public spectacle; but contentment will not appear in any countenance. A sullen discontent will arise, and spread from one province to another; and from the mother-country to the colonies. When the fortunes of all men are injured or threatened.



at once, the alarm and the commotion becomes general. Exertions of authority, multiplied by the imprudence of those who first venture upon them, occasion a general alarm, and fall successively upon all bodies of men. The avengers of crimes, and supporters of the rights of the colonists, are brought up even from America, and confined like malefactors in the prisons of Europe. The weapons of government, which seemed useless against the enemy, are directed against these valuable subjects of the state. Those very arms that were not able to defend them during the war, are employed to spread terror among them in time of peace. Is it thus that colonies are preserved, and their prosperity promoted? Rome learnt of her enemies how to conquer the old world; let France now learn of her rival how to people and cultivate the new.

END OF THE THIRTEENTH BOOK.

B O O K XIV.

Settlement of the English in the American islands.

ENGLAND was not in a very flourishing situation when her settlements in America were first begun in 1625. Her agriculture was not extended either to flax or hemp. The attempts that had been made to raise mulberry trees and breed silkworms had been unsuccessful. The labours of the husbandman were wholly engaged in the growing of corn, which, notwithstanding the turn of the nation for rural employments, was seldom sufficient for home consumption, and many of their granaries were stored from the fields bordering on the Baltic.

The state of England when she began to form settlements in the American islands.

INDUSTRY was still less advanced than agriculture. It was confined to woollen manufactures.

These had been increased since the exportation of unwrought wool had been prohibited ; but these islanders, who seemed to work only for themselves, were ignorant of the method of spreading those elegant ornaments upon their stuffs, which taste contrived to promote the sale and consumption of them. They sent their cloths over to Holland, where the Dutch gave them their colouring and gloss ; from whence they circulated all over Europe, and were even brought back to England.

NAVIGATION hardly employed at that time ten thousand sailors. These were in the service of exclusive companies, which had engrossed every branch of trade, not excepting that of cloth, which alone constituted a tenth part of the commercial riches of the nation. These, therefore, were centered in the hands of three or four hundred persons, who agreed, for their own advantage, to fix the price of goods, both at going out and coming into the kingdom. The privileges of these monopolizers were exercised in the capital, where the court sold the provinces. London alone had six times the number of ships that all the other ports in the kingdom put together had.

THE public revenue neither was nor could be very considerable. It was farmed out ; a ruinous method, which has preceded the establishment of the finance in all states, but has only been continued under arbitrary governments. The expences were proportionable to the low state of the treasury. The fleet was small, and the ships so weak,
that

that in times of necessity the merchantmen were turned into men of war. A hundred and sixty thousand militia, which was the whole military force of the nation, were armed in time of war. There were no standing forces in time of peace, and the king himself had no guards.

WITH such confined powers at home the nation should not have ventured to extend itself in settlements abroad. Notwithstanding this, some colonies were established which laid a solid foundation of prosperity. The origin of these settlements was owing to certain events, the causes of which may be traced very far back.

WHOEVER is acquainted with the history and progress of the English government, knows that the regal authority was for a long time balanced only by a small number of considerable proprietors of land called Barons. They perpetually oppressed the people, the greater part of whom were degraded by slavery; and they were constantly struggling against the power of the crown, with more or less success, according to the character of the leading men, and the chance of circumstances. These political dissensions occasioned much bloodshed.

Causes
which hastened the
population of the British
islands.

THE kingdom was exhausted by intestine wars, which had lasted two hundred years, when Henry VII. assumed the reins of government on the decision of a battle, in which the nation, divided into two camps, had fought to give itself a master. That able prince availed himself of the state of depression into which a series of calamities had sunk

his subjects, to extend the regal authority, the limits of which, the anarchy of the feudal government, though continually encroaching upon them, had never been able to fix. He was assisted in this undertaking by the faction which had placed the crown upon his head, and which, being the weakest, could not hope to maintain itself in the principal employments to which those who were engaged in it had been raised, unless they supported the ambition of their leader. This plan was strengthened by permitting the nobility for the first time to alienate their lands. This dangerous indulgence, joined to a taste for luxury, which then began to prevail in Europe, brought on a great revolution in the fortunes of individuals. The immense fiefs of the barons were gradually dissipated, and the estates of the commoners increased.

THE rights belonging to the several estates being divided with the property of them, it became so much the more difficult to unite the will and the power of many against the authority of one. The monarchs took advantage of this period, so favourable to their ambition, to govern without controul. The decayed nobility were in fear of a power which they had reinforced with all their losses. The commons thought themselves sufficiently honoured by the privilege of imposing all the national taxes. The people, in some degree eased of their yoke by this slight alteration in the constitution, and whose circle of ideas is always confined to business or labour, became tired of seditions, from the desolation and miseries which were the conse-

quence and the punishment of them. So that, while the nation was employed in search of that sovereign authority which had been lost in the confusion of civil wars, its views were fixed upon the monarch alone. The majesty of the throne, the whole lustre of which was centered in him, seemed to be the source of that authority, of which it should only be the visible sign and permanent instrument.

SUCH was the situation of England, when James I. was called thither from Scotland, as being sole heir to the two kingdoms, which, by his accession, were united under one head. A turbulent nobility, imparting their fury to their barbarous vassals, had kindled the fire of sedition in those northern mountains which divided the island into two distinct states. The monarch had from his earliest years been as averse from limited authority, as the people were from despotism and absolute monarchy, which then prevailed all over Europe; and as the new king was equal to other sovereigns, it was natural that he should be ambitious of the same power. His predecessors had enjoyed it even in England for a century past. But he was not aware that they owed it to their own political abilities, or to favourable circumstances. This religious prince, who believed he held all from God and nothing from men, fancied that strength of reason, wisdom, and counsel, was centered in himself, and seemed to arrogate to himself that infallibility of which the pope had been deprived by the reformation, the tenets of which he adopted though he disliked

them. These false principles, which tended to change government into a mystery of religion, the more odious, as it equally influences the opinions, wills, and actions of men, were so rooted in his mind, together with all the other prejudices of a bad education, that he did not even think of supporting them with any of the human aids of prudence or force.

Nothing could be more repugnant to the general disposition of the people than this system. All was in commotion both at home and abroad. The discovery of America had hastened the advancement of Europe. Navigation extended round the whole globe. The mutual intercourse of nations would soon have removed prejudices, and opened the door to industry and knowledge. The mechanical and liberal arts were extended, and were advancing to perfection by the luxury that prevailed. Literature acquired the ornaments of taste; and the sciences gained that degree of solidity which springs from a spirit of calculation and commerce. The circle of politics was extended. This universal ferment exalted the ideas of men. The several bodies which composed the monstrous colossus of gothic government, roused from that lethargic state of ignorance in which they had been sunk for many ages, soon began to exert themselves on all sides, and to form enterprises. On the continent, where mercenary troops had been adopted under pretence of maintaining discipline, monarchs acquired an unlimited authority, oppressing their subjects either by force or intrigue. In
England,

England, the love of liberty, so natural to every thinking man, excited in the people by the authors of religious innovations, and awakened in the minds of men enlightened by becoming conversant with the great writers of antiquity, who derived from their democratic government that sublimity of reason and sentiment by which they are distinguished; this love of liberty kindled in every generous breast the utmost abhorrence for unlimited authority. The ascendant which Elizabeth found means to acquire and to preserve by an uninterrupted prosperity of forty years, withheld this impatience, or turned it to enterprises that were beneficial to the state. But no sooner did another branch ascend the throne, and the scepter devolved to a monarch, who, by the very violence of his pretensions, was not much to be dreaded, than the nation asserted its rights, and entertained the ambitious thoughts of governing itself.

It was at this period that warm disputes arose between the court and the parliament. Both powers seemed to be making trial of their strength by continual opposition. The prince pretended that an entire passive obedience was due to him; and that national assemblies were only ornaments, not the basis of the constitution. The citizens loudly exclaimed against these principles, always weak when they come to be discussed; and maintained, that the people were an essential part of government, as well as the monarch, and, perhaps, in a higher degree. The one is the matter, the other the form. Now the form may, and must change,
for

for the preservation of the matter. The supreme law is the welfare of the people, not that of the prince; the king may die, the monarchy may be at an end; and society subsist without either monarch or throne. In this manner the English reasoned at the dawn of liberty. They quarrelled, they opposed, and threatened each other. James died in the midst of these debates, leaving his son to discuss his rights, with the resolution of extending them.

THE experience of all ages has shewn, that the state of tranquillity which follows the establishment of absolute power, occasions a coolness in the minds of the people, damps their courage, cramps their genius, and throws a whole nation into an universal lethargy. On the contrary, the commotion of a constitution tending to liberty is irregular and rapid; it is a continued fever, more or less violent; but always attended with convulsions.

ENGLAND experienced this in the beginning of the reign of Charles I.; who, though not so great a pedant as his father, was equally fond of authority. The division which had begun between the king and the parliament, spread itself throughout the nation. The highest class of the nobility, and the second, which was the richest, afraid of being confounded with the vulgar, engaged on the side of the king, from whom they derived that borrowed lustre which they return him by a voluntary and venal bondage. As they still possessed most of the considerable land-estates, they engaged almost all the country people in their party; who
naturally

naturally love the king, because they think he must love them. London, and all the great towns, influenced by municipal government with the republicans, declared for the parliament, and drew about them the trading part of the nation, who, regarding themselves as much as the merchants in Holland, aspired to the same freedom as that democracy.

THESE divisions brought on the sharpest, the most bloody, and the most obstinate civil war ever recorded in history. Never did the English spirit shew itself in so dreadful a manner. Every day exhibited fresh scenes of violence, which seemed to have been already carried to the highest excess; and these again were outdone by others, still more atrocious. It seemed as if the nation was just upon the brink of destruction, and that every Briton had sworn to bury himself under the ruins of his country.

IN this general tumult, the most moderate sought for a peaceable retreat in the American islands, which the English had lately seized upon. The tranquillity they found there, induced others to follow them. While the sedition was spreading in the mother-country, the colonies grew up and were peopled. The patriots who had fled from faction were soon after joined by the royalists, who were oppressed by the republican party, which had at last prevailed.

By what
men the
British is-
lands were
peopled.

BOTH these were followed by those restless and spirited men, whose strong passions inspire them with great desires and vast projects; who despise dangers,

dangers, hazards and fatigues, and wish to see no other end to them but death or fortune; who know of no medium between affluence and want; equally ready to overturn or to serve their country, to lay it waste or to enrich it.

* THE islands were also the refuge of merchants who had been unfortunate in trade, or of persons reduced by their creditors to a state of indigence and idleness. Unable as they were to fulfil their engagements, this very misfortune paved the way to their prosperity. After a few years they returned with affluence into their own country, and met with the highest respect in those very places from whence they had been banished with ignominy and contempt.

THIS resource was still more necessary for young people, who in the first transports of youth had been drawn into excesses of debauchery and licentiousness. If they had not quitted their country, shame and disgrace, which never fail to depress the mind, would have prevented them from recovering either regularity of manners or public esteem. But in another country, where the experience they had of vice might prove a lesson of wisdom, and where they had no occasion to attempt to remove any unfavourable impressions, they found, after their misfortunes, a harbour in which they rested with safety. Their industry made amends for their past follies; and men who had left Europe like vagabonds, and who had disgraced it, returned honest men, and useful members of society.

ALL these several colonists had at their disposal, for the clearing and tilling of their lands, the most profligate set of men of the three kingdoms, who had deserved death for capital crimes; but who, from motives of humanity and good policy, were suffered to live and to work for the benefit of the state. These malefactors, who were transported for a term of years, which they were to spend in slavery, became industrious, and acquired manners, which placed them once more in the way of fortune. There were some of those, who, when restored to society by the freedom they had gained, became planters, heads of families, and the owners of the best plantations; a proof how much it is for the interest of a civilized society to admit this lenity in the penal laws, so conformable to human nature, which is frail, but capable of sensibility, and of turning from evil to good.

THE mother-country, however, was too much taken up with its own domestic dissensions, to think of giving laws to the islands under its dominion; and the colonists were not sufficiently enlightened to draw up such a system of legislation as was fit for an infant society. While the civil war was rectifying the government in England, the colonies, just emerging from a state of infancy, formed their own constitution upon the model of the mother-country. In each of these separate settlements, a chief represents the king; a council the peers; and the deputies of the several districts, the commons. The general assembly enacts laws, regulates taxes, and judges of the administration.

Under what form of government the British islands were established.

The executive part belongs to the governor ; who also occasionally determines upon causes which have not been tried before, but in conjunction with the council, and by the majority of votes. Though the members of this body derive their rank from him, they will not suffer him to bribe their votes, for fear of exposing themselves to the resentment of the general assembly, which has the sole power of removing them.

GREAT-BRITAIN, to reconcile her own interests with the freedom of her colonies, took care that no laws should be enacted there which were inconsistent with her own. The governors she sends thither to command in her name, swear before they go, that they will not suffer the least infringement of this fundamental maxim. This oath must prevent the commanders from betraying the mother-country to favour the islands ; which, as they are to pay the governor's salary, might otherwise make his compliance the measure of their liberality.

ON the other hand, this kind of dependence checks the governor's pride, and prevents him from becoming tyrannical. The commissioners for the plantations have frequently in parliament attacked a prerogative that has restrained their authority. Regardless of the inconveniences that might attend it, the parliament has always adhered to this wise regulation. Justly dreading that spirit of rapaciousness which induces men to cross the seas, they have subjected the placemen, who should violate the laws of the colonies, to the same penalties

as are inflicted in England on those who trespass upon national liberty.

THESE precautions were not thought sufficient for the safety of the colonists, whom the nation cherishes and protects as her children's children. Every colony has one or more deputies in the mother country. Their functions are important. They are designed to prevent the abuse of power in the governors; to solicit the legislative body for the improvement and defence of the settlements, whose rights and wants they represent; and to combine the particular interest of the trade of the colonies with the general welfare of the nation. These agents do the same thing at London as the representatives of the people do in parliament. They plead the cause of those distant provinces. Unhappy will it be for the state, if ever it should disregard the clamours of the representatives, whoever they are. The counties in England would rise; the colonies would shake off their allegiance in America; the treasures of both worlds would be lost to an island which nature has made sovereign of the sea.

UNDER what milder and wiser government could Englishmen live; who from the American islands are attached to their own country by the ties of blood, and by those of necessity? And, indeed, the colonists established upon these foreign shores are constantly looking up to their mother-country, who is ever attentive to their preservation. One might say, that, as the eagle who never loses sight of the nest where she fosters her young,
London

London seems to look down upon her colonies, and to see them grow up and prosper under her tender care. Her numberless vessels, covering an extent of two thousand leagues with their proud sails, form as it were a bridge over the ocean, and carry on an uninterrupted communication between both worlds. With good laws, which maintain what she has once established, she preserves her possessions abroad without a standing army, which is always an oppressive and ruinous burden. Two very small corps fixed at Antigua and Jamaica, are sufficient for a nation that can at any time transport troops wherever they may be wanted.

By these beneficent regulations, dictated by humanity and sound policy, the English islands soon grew happy, though not rich. Their culture was confined to tobacco, cotton, ginger, and indigo. Some of the enterprising colonists imported sugar-canes from Brazil, and they multiplied prodigiously, but to no great purpose. They were ignorant of the art of managing this valuable plant, and drew from it such indifferent sugar, that it would not sell in Europe, or sold at the lowest price. A series of voyages to Fernambucca taught them how to make use of the treasure they had carried off; and the Portuguese, who till then had engrossed all the sugar trade, found, in 1650, in an ally, whose industry they thought precarious, a rival who was one day to supplant them.

THE mother-country, however, had but a very small share in the prosperity of her colonies. They themselves sent their own commodities directly to
all

all parts of the world, where they thought they would be disposed of to most advantage; and indiscriminately admitted ships of all nations into their ports. This unlimited freedom must of course throw almost all their trade into the hands of that nation which, in consequence of the low interest their money bears, the largeness of their stock, the number of their ships, and the reasonableness of their duties of import and export, could afford to make the best terms, to buy at the dearest, and sell at the cheapest rate. These people were the Dutch. They united all the advantages of a superior army; which, being ever master of the field, is free in all its operations. They soon seized upon the profits of so many productions, which they had neither planted nor gathered. Ten of their ships were seen in the British islands to one English vessel.

THE nation had paid little attention to this evil during the disturbances of the civil wars; but as soon as these troubles were composed, and the state restored to tranquillity by the very violence of its commotions, it began to turn its views towards its foreign possessions. It perceived that those subjects, who had as it were taken refuge in America, would be lost to the state, if foreign powers, which consumed the fruits of the industry of the colonies, were not excluded. The discussion of this point brought on the famous navigation act in 1651, which excluded all foreign ships from entering the harbours of the English islands, and consequently obliged their produce to be exported directly to the

countries under the dominion of England. The government, though aware of the inconveniences of such an exclusion, was not alarmed at it, but considered the empire only as a tree, whose sap must be turned back to the trunk, when it flows too freely to some of the branches.

It was, however, a fortunate circumstance for England, that this restraining law could not then be enforced in its utmost rigour. A kind of negligence in the execution of it, allowed time for the colonies to increase their sugar plantations, by the ready sale they found for their sugars, which enabled them insensibly to raise themselves upon the ruin of the Portuguese. These plantations made such rapid progress in the space of nine years, that in 1660, when it was judged that the law might safely be put in execution in its utmost strictness, the English were already masters of the sugar-trade all over Europe; except in the Mediterranean, which had continued faithful to their competitors, on account of the act of re-exportation, which had been occasioned by the navigation act. It is true, in order to attain this superiority, they had been obliged greatly to lower the price of the commodity; but their plentiful crops made them ample amends for this necessary sacrifice. If other nations were encouraged by their success to raise plantations, at least for their own consumption, the English opened other markets, which supplied the place of the former. The only misfortune they experienced in a long series of years, was, the seeing many of their cargoes taken by French

French privateers, and sold at a low price. The planter sustained by this a double inconvenience, that of losing part of his sugars, and being obliged to sell the remainder below its value.

NOTWITHSTANDING these transient piracies, which always ceased in time of peace, the plantations still continued to increase in the English islands. It appears from entries which are said to be exact, that, about the year 1680, they sent annually to Europe 30,000 hogheads of sugar, each containing twelve hundred weight. Their exports, from 1708 to 1718, were of 53,439 annually; from 1718 to 1727, they rose to 68,931, and the six following years to 93,889. But from 1733 to 1737 they fell to 75,695; and the following years they amounted regularly to 70,000 hogheads.

In what manner the prosperity of the British islands declined.

IF we inquire into the cause of this diminution, we shall find it was owing to France. This kingdom, which, from its situation, and from the active genius of its inhabitants, should be foremost in every undertaking, is so restrained by the nature of its government, that it is the last in becoming acquainted with its own advantages and interests. The French first procured their sugars from the English; from whom they afterwards received their informations. They made some at first for their own consumption, and began exporting it in 1716. The superiority of their soil, the advantage of fresh lands, the frugality of their planters, who were yet poor, all conspired to enable them to sell the production at a lower price than their competitors. This advantage, the most im-

portant one that can be acquired in trade, obtained them the preference in all the markets. As their produce increased, that of their rivals was rejected because it was dearer. The decay was so rapid, that a nation which had supplied all Europe with sugars, and still sold 19,202 hogshheads to foreigners in 1719, sold no more than 7,715 in 1733, 5,211 in 1737, and none at all in 1740.

THE English islands had begun to complain long before this revolution was completed. They had applied to parliament as early as the year 1731, to engage them to prevent the ruin of a trade that was already lost. Their petitions were at first disregarded. Most people were of opinion that the lands in the colonies were exhausted; and the parliament itself had adopted this prejudice; not considering, that though the soil was not altogether so luxuriant as fresh grounds, yet it still retained that degree of fertility which it seldom loses when constantly cultivated, unless it is materially injured by some accidental calamity. But when it was made evident, from estimates laid before the house, that the last crops had been more plentiful than the former, the parliament began to attend to the method of restoring this source of public fortune.

THE political œconomy of commerce consists in selling cheaper than one's rivals. This the English islands were able to do, before the mother-country, in 1663, had appropriated to herself a duty of four and a half per cent. upon all sugars brought from Barbadoes, which soon extended to those of the

other settlements. The great plenty of the commodity, however, prevented their sinking immediately under this oppression. But, the necessities of the colonies having since compelled them to burden themselves with fresh taxes, they were no longer able to withstand a competition which grew every day more formidable; and they evidently saw themselves supplanted in all parts. Possibly they might have been rescued from this deplorable situation, by suppressing the duty of four and a half per cent. and by sacrificing to their local administration the enormous duties their commodities pay on their entry into Great-Britain; but her great expences, and her heavy national debt, would not certainly admit of this generosity; and the government thought it was sufficiently liberal to the colonies, when it allowed them the liberty, in 1739, to send their sugars directly to all the ports of Europe. This concession, which was contrary to the navigation act, proved ineffectual. The French maintained their superiority in all the markets; and the English colonies were reduced to supply sugars merely for the consumption of the British dominions, which did not exceed 12,000 hogsheds at the beginning of this century; and which, in 1755, had amounted to 70,000.

ENGLAND was beholden for this produce to her ancient possessions in the West-Indies. The island of Barbadoes, which is situated to windward of all the others, appeared to have never been inhabited, not even by savages, when some Englishmen from St. Christopher's went and settled there in 1629.

Settlement
of the Eng-
lish at Bar-
badoes.

They found it covered with such large and hard trees, that it required uncommon resolution and patience to fell them and root them up. The ground was soon cleared of this incumbrance, or stripped of this ornament: for it is doubtful whether nature does not decorate her own work better than man, who alters every thing for himself alone. Some patriots, tired of seeing the blood of their countrymen spilt, went and peopled this foreign land. While the other colonies were rather ravaged than cultivated by those vagabonds who had been driven from their native country by poverty or licentiousness, Barbadoes daily received new inhabitants; who brought along with them not only their stock of money, but a turn for labour, courage, activity, and ambition; those vices and virtues which are the effects of civil wars.

By these means, an island, which is no more than eight leagues long and four broad, attained to a population of a hundred thousand souls; and a trade that employed four hundred ships of 150 tons burthen each. Such was the state of its prosperity in 1676, the period of its utmost greatness. Never had the earth beheld such a number of planters collected in so small a compass, or so many rich productions raised in so short a time. The labours, directed by Europeans, were performed by slaves purchased in Africa, or even raised in America. This unwarrantable method of procuring them was but a ruinous kind of prop for a new edifice, and very nearly occasioned the subversion of it.

SOME Englishmen, who had landed on the coasts of the continent to get slaves, were discovered by the Caribs, who were the object of their search. These savages fell upon them, and put them all to death or to flight. A young man, who had been long pursued, ran into a wood; where an Indian woman meeting him saved his life, concealed and fed him, and some time after conducted him to the sea-side. His companions were laying at anchor there, waiting for the men they missed, and sent the boat to fetch him. His deliverer insisted on following him on board the ship. They were no sooner landed at Barbadoes, but the monster sold her who had saved his life, and had bestowed her heart as well as her person upon him. To vindicate the honour of the English nation, one of her poets has recorded this shocking instance of avarice and perfidy, to be abhorred by posterity: it has been told in several languages, and held out to the detestation of all foreign nations.

THE Indians, who dared not undertake to revenge themselves, imparted their resentment to the negroes, who had stronger motives, if possible, for hating the English. The slaves unanimously vowed the death of their tyrants. This conspiracy was carried on with such secrecy, that, the day before it was to have been carried into execution, the colony had not the least suspicion of it. But, as if generosity was always to be the virtue of the wretched, one of the leaders of the plot informed his master of it. Letters were immediately dispatched to all the plantations, and came in time to prevent the impending destruction. The following

night the slaves were seized in their huts; the most guilty were executed at break of day; and this act of severity reduced the rest to obedience.

THEY have never revolted since, and yet the exportations do not amount to one half of what they formerly were. This revolution had been brought on by the extravagance of the inhabitants; by contagious distempers; by hurricanes; by the emigration of many who are gone over to other islands, or to the continent of North-America; by the waste of the land, and the necessity of manuring it; and, lastly, by the competition of a rival nation, which has been so fortunate as to meet with a better soil.

AT this present time there are at Barbadoes no more than 30,000 slaves, who are employed in manuring the ground with varech, a sea-weed which the tide throws on shore. It is in this varech that the sugar-canes are planted. The earth has little more to do with the growing of them, than the tubs in which orange-trees are planted in Europe. The whole produce of this laborious process is no more than 15,000 hogsheds of raw sugar. They are conveyed to England, where they are sold for about 6,750,000 livres*. The spirits, which may amount to 800,000 livres†, are all sent to North-America.

BARBADOES is the only trading colony belonging to the English in the windward islands. Almost all the ships laden with slaves, that come from the coast of Africa, land there. If they cannot

* 295,312l. 2s.

† 35,000l.

sell their negroes at a good price, they go to some other place ; but it seldom happens that they do not dispose of them at Barbadoes. The usual price of slaves is from eight to nine hundred livres *, according to the nation or tribe they belong to. In this bargain no distinction is ever made of age or sex ; but the whole cargo together sells at so much a head. The payments are made in bills of exchange upon London at ninety days sight.

THESE negroes, which the merchants have bought by wholesale, they retail on this very island, or in some other of the English islands. The refuse is smuggled into the Spanish or French islands. By this traffic five or six millions of livres † were formerly circulated in Barbadoes ; the specie that is still to be found there, but in smaller quantities, is all foreign ; it is looked upon as a commodity, and is only valued by the weight. The shipping properly belonging to this settlement, consists of a sufficient number of vessels for their several correspondences, and about forty sloops employed in the fishery of the flying-fish. Nature and art have conspired to fortify this island. Two thirds of its circumference are rendered inaccessible by dangerous rocks ; and on the side that is open lines have been drawn, which are defended at proper distances by forts, provided with a formidable artillery. So that Barbadoes is still in a condition to command respect in time of war, and to claim the attention of its neighbours in time of peace. It affords a solid foundation for the richest of all cultures, a convenient mart for the slave trade, a larger pro-

* About 37l. on an average. † About 240,500l. on an average.



portion of revenue, of population, of commerce, and of forces, than could reasonably be expected from an island of such inconsiderable extent, especially when compared to other neighbouring islands. Antigua, which is almost as large, neither enjoys the same advantages, nor is of the same importance.

Settlement
of the Eng-
lish at An-
tigua.

THIS island, which is but twenty miles long, but of considerable breadth, was found totally uninhabited by those few Frenchmen who fled thither in 1629, upon being driven from St. Christopher's by the Spaniards. The want of springs, which doubtless was the reason why no savages had settled there, induced these fugitives to return as soon as they could regain their former habitations. Some Englishmen, more enterprising than either the French or the Caribs, flattered themselves that they should overcome this great obstacle, by collecting the rain-water in cisterns; and they therefore settled there. The year in which this settlement was begun is not exactly known; but it appears, that in January 1640 there were about thirty families on the island.

THE number was not much increased, when king Charles II. granted the property of this island to lord Willoughby, as his father had given that of Barbadoes to the earl of Carlisle. His lordship sent over a pretty considerable number of inhabitants at his own expence in 1666. It is probable they would never have enriched themselves by the culture of tobacco, indigo, and ginger, the only commodities they dealt in, had not colonel Codrington

rington introduced into the island, which was then restored to the dominion of the state, a source of wealth, in the year 1680, by the culture of sugar. This being at first black, harsh, and coarse, was rejected in England, and could only be disposed of in Holland, and in the Hans towns; where it sold at a much lower price than that of the other colonies. By the most assiduous labour, art got the better of nature, and brought this sugar to as great a perfection, and to sell for as high a price, as any other. The island yields 8000 hogheads, the only fruit of the labours of fifteen or sixteen thousand blacks.

THE abuse of authority, so common in most nations, but so rare among the English, was severely felt at Antigua, and did not go unpunished. The governor, colonel Park, in defiance of the laws, and regardless of morals or decorum, indulged himself in the most unbounded acts of licentiousness. The members of the council, unable to put a stop to excesses which they abhorred, summoned the colonists in 1710 to protect their representatives, to defend the fortunes of the public, and to put an end to so many calamities. Upon this they immediately took up arms. The tyrant was attacked in his own house, and massacred. His body was then thrown naked into the street, and mutilated by those whose bed he had dishonoured. The mother-country, more moved by the sacred rights of nature than jealous of her own authority, overlooked an act which her vigilance ought to have prevented, but which she was too equi-

equitable to revenge. It is only the part of tyranny to excite a rebellion, and then to quench it in the blood of the oppressed. Machiavelism, which teaches princes the art of being feared and detested, directs them to stifle the victims whose cries grow importunate. Humanity prescribes to kings, justice in legislation, mildness in government, lenity to prevent insurrections, and mercy to pardon them. Religion enjoins obedience to the people; but God, above all things, requires equity in princes. If they violate it, innumerable witnesses will rise up against a single man at the final judgment. The American islands have sometimes avenged the authority of kings and the rights of the people upon iniquitous governors, who, by a double treachery, prostituted the king's name to oppress a nation. Antigua will be celebrated in history for this terrible example of justice. This island is, however, too confined; but that of Montserrat is still less considerable.

Settlement
of the Eng-
lish at
Montser-
rat.

THE Spaniards discovered this island in 1493. They did not settle there, but gave it the name of a mountain in Catalonia, which it resembles in shape. It is almost round, and about nine leagues in circumference. The ground is very uneven, full of barren hills, and vallies fertilized by the waters. The English, who landed there in 1632, were not satisfied with disturbing the peace of the many savages who dwelt there, but drove them all away. This cruelty was not productive of the advantages expected from it. The progress of the colony

colony was but slow, and it acquired no kind of importance till towards the end of the century.

BOOK
XIV.

AT this period a spirit of universal exertion displayed itself; which, however, could not be accounted for from any particular cause. The less important cultures, which scarce afforded a scanty provision of common necessities, were all changed for sugar plantations. Five thousand hogheads are now annually made by ten thousand slaves; though several misfortunes, occasioned either by war or by the elements, have, from time to time, disappointed the industry of the planters. The loading and unloading of ships is difficult in an island which has not one good road. They would even be in danger upon the coasts, if the masters did not take care, when they see a storm approaching, to put out to sea, or to take shelter in some neighbouring harbour. Nevis is exposed to the same inconvenience.

THE most generally received opinion is, that the English settled on this island in 1628. It is properly but a very high mountain, of an easy ascent, and crowned with tall trees. The plantations lie all round; and, beginning at the sea-side, are continued almost to the top of the mountain; but the higher they stand the less fertile they are, because the soil grows more stony. This island is watered by many streams, which would be so many sources of plenty, if they did not in stormy weather swell into torrents, wash away the lands, and destroy the treasures they have produced.

Settlement
of the Eng-
lish at Ne-
vis.

THE colony of Nevis is a model of virtue, order, and piety. These exemplary manners have been owing to the paternal care of the first governor. This incomparable man inspired all the inhabitants, by his own example, with a love of labour, a reasonable œconomy, and innocent recreations. All the plantations, especially those of sugar, were successfully encouraged. The person who commanded, and those who obeyed, were all actuated by the same principle of the strictest equity. Never was there an instance of greater harmony, peace, and security. So rapid was the progress of this singular settlement, that, if we may credit all the accounts of those times, it soon contained 10,000 white people and 20,000 blacks. Admitting even that such a population within the compass of six leagues should be exaggerated, still it will shew the amazing but infallible effect of virtue, in promoting the prosperity of a well-regulated society.

BUT, even virtue itself will not secure either individuals or societies from the calamities of nature, or from the injuries of fortune. In 1689 a dreadful mortality swept away half this happy colony. It was ravaged in 1706 by a French squadron, which carried off three or four thousand slaves. The next year, the ruin of this island was completed by the most violent hurricane ever recorded. Since this series of disasters, it has recovered a little; and at this day contains 8000 blacks, and produces 4000 hogsheds of sugar. Perhaps, those who repine most at the destruction
of

of the Americans, and the slavery of the Africans, would receive some consolation if the Europeans were every where as humane as the English have been in this island of Nevis, and if all the islands in America were as well cultivated in proportion; but nature and society afford few instances of such miraculous prosperity.

B O, O'K
XIV.

ENGLAND draws no productions from Barbuda, Anguilla, or the Virgin islands. Four thousand inhabitants, half freemen, and half slaves, scattered about these miserable settlements, breed some cattle, and cultivate some few provisions, which they sell in the neighbouring colonies. Their poverty does not prevent them from enjoying the benefit of a free and separate government; yet the chief of these islands, as also of Antigua, Montserrat, and Nevis, is only the deputy of a governor-general, who resides at St. Christopher's.

SAINT CHRISTOPHER'S was the nursery of all the English and French colonies in America. Both nations arrived there on the same day in 1625. They shared the island between them; signed a perpetual neutrality, and entered into a mutual engagement to assist each other against their common enemy the Spaniard, who for a century past had invaded or disturbed the two hemispheres. But jealousy soon divided those whom interest had united. The French grew envious of the prosperous labours of the English; who, on their side, could not patiently bear that an idle neighbour, whose only employment was hunting and galantry, should be trying to rob them of their wives. This reciprocal

Settlement
of the
English at
St. Chris-
topher's.

reciprocal uneasiness soon created quarrels, war, and devastations, though neither of the parties aimed at conquest. These were only domestic animosities, in which government took no part. Concerns of greater importance having kindled a war between the two mother-countries in 1666, St. Christopher's became a scene of carnage for half a century. The weaker party having been compelled to evacuate the colony, soon entered it again with a reinforcement, both to revenge their defeat and to repair their losses. This long contest, in which both parties alternately had the advantage, was terminated by the total expulsion of the French in 1702; and the peace of Utrecht cut off all their hopes of ever returning thither.

THIS was no great sacrifice at that time, for a people who had never exerted themselves otherwise in that colony than in hunting and carrying on war. Their population amounted but to 667 white people, of all ages and of both sexes; 29 free blacks, and 659 slaves. All their herds consisted only of 265 head of horned cattle, and 157 horses. They cultivated nothing but a little cotton and indigo, and had but one single sugar plantation.

THOUGH the English had for a long time made a greater advantage of this island, yet they did not immediately reap all the benefit they might have done from having the sole possession of it.

THIS conquest was for a long time a prey to rapacious governors, who sold the lands for their own profit, or gave them away to their creatures; though they could warrant the duration of the sale, or grant,

grant, only during the term of their administration. The parliament of England at length remedied this evil, by ordering, that all lands should be put up to auction, and the purchase-money paid into the public coffers. After this prudent regulation, the new plantations were as well cultivated as the old ones.

THE whole of the island may be about seventy miles in circumference. The center is full of high and barren mountains. Agreeable, neat and commodious habitations, adorned with avenues, fountains and groves, are dispersed over the plains. The taste for rural life, which the English have retained more than any other civilized nation in Europe, prevails in the highest degree at St. Christopher's. They never had the least occasion to form themselves into small societies in order to pass away the time; and if the French had not left there a small town, where their manners are preserved, they would still be unacquainted with that kind of social life, which is productive of more alterations than pleasures; which is kept up by gallantry, and terminates in debauchery; which begins with convivial joys, and ends in the quarrels of gaming. Instead of this image of union, which is in fact only a beginning of discord, the English planters live by themselves, but live happy; their soul and countenance as serene as the clear sky, under which they breathe a pure and wholesome air in the midst of their plantations, and surrounded with their slaves, whom they certainly govern with paternal tenderness, since they inspire them

with generous, and sometimes, heroic sentiments. St. Christopher's has afforded such a signal instance of love and friendship as is not to be paralleled in fable or history.

Two negroes, both young, handsome, robust, courageous, and born with a soul of an uncommon cast, had been fond of each other from their infancy. Partners in the same labours, they were united by their sufferings; which, in feeling minds, form a stronger attachment than pleasures. If they were not happy, they comforted each other at least in their misery. Love, which generally obliterates the remembrance of all misfortunes, served only to make theirs complete. A negro girl, who was likewise a slave, and whose eyes sparkled, no doubt, with greater vivacity and fire from the contrast of her dark complexion, excited an equal flame in the hearts of these two friends. The girl, who was more capable of inspiring than of feeling a strong passion, would readily have accepted either; but neither of them would deprive his friend of her, or yield her up to him. Time served only to increase the torments they suffered, without affecting their friendship or their love. Oftentimes did tears of anguish stream from their eyes, in the midst of the demonstrations of friendship they gave each other, at the sight of the too-beloved object that threw them into despair. They sometimes swore that they would love her no more, and that they would rather part with life than forfeit their friendship. The whole plantation was moved at the sight of these conflicts. The love of the two friends

for the beautiful negro girl was the topic of every conversation. BOOK
XIV.

One day they followed her into a wood ; there, each embraced her, clasped her a thousand times to his heart, swore all the oaths of attachment, and called her every tender name that love could inspire ; when, suddenly, without speaking or looking at each other, they both plunged a dagger into her breast. She expired, and they mingled their tears and groans with her last breath. They roared aloud, and made the wood resound with their violent outcries. A slave came running to their assistance, and saw them at a distance, stifling the victim of their extraordinary passion with their kisses. He called out to some others, who soon came up, and found these two friends embracing each other upon the body of this unhappy girl, and bathed in her blood ; while they themselves were expiring in the streams that flowed from their own wounds.

THESE lovers and these friends belonged to a body of 25,000 negroes, destined to furnish Europe with twelve or thirteen thousand hogheads of sugar. Is it then in the midst of such severe labours, and in so degrading a station, that we see such actions as must astonish the whole world ? If there can be a man who is not struck with horror and compassion at the greatness of this ferocious love, nature must have formed him, not for the slavery of the negroes, but for the tyranny of their masters. Such a man must have lived without commiserating others, and will die without comfort ;

The Eng-
lish drive
the Spani-
ards from
Jamaica,
and settle
themselves
there.

he must never have shed a tear, and none will ever be shed for him. But it is now time to quit St. Christopher's, and pass on to Jamaica.

THIS island, which lies to lee-ward of the other English islands, and which geographers have ranked among the greater Antilles, is nearly of an oval figure, the greater diameter being 170 miles, and the less 70 at most. It is intersected with several ridges of high, craggy mountains, where dreadful rocks are heaped one upon another. Their barrenness does not prevent their being covered all over with a prodigious quantity of trees of different kinds, that strike their roots through the clefts of the rocks, and attract the moisture that is deposited there by storms and frequent fogs. This perpetual verdure, kept up and embellished by a multitude of plentiful cascades, makes a constant spring all the year round, and exhibits the most enchanting prospect in nature. But these waters, which fall from the barren summits, and fertilize the plains below, are brackish and unwholesome. This defect is happily compensated by the salubrity of the air, which is the purest of any between the tropics in either hemisphere.

COLUMBUS discovered this island in 1494, but made no settlement there. Eight years after, he was thrown upon it by a storm. Having lost his ships, and being unable to get away, he implored the humanity of the savages, who gave him all the assistance that natural pity suggests. But these people, who cultivated no more land than what was just sufficient to supply their own wants, soon grew

grew tired of supporting strangers, to the manifest risque of starving themselves, and insensibly withdrew from their neighbourhood. The Spaniards, who had already indisposed the Indians against them by repeated acts of violence, grew outrageous, and proceeded so far as to take up arms against a chief whom they accused of too much severity, because he disapproved of their ferocity. Columbus, forced to yield to their threats, in order to disengage himself from so desperate a situation, availed himself of one of those natural phænomena, in which a man of genius may sometimes find a resource, which he may be excused for having recourse to in a case of urgent necessity.

FROM the little knowledge he had acquired in astronomy, he knew there would soon be an eclipse of the moon. He took advantage of this circumstance, and summoned all the Caciques in the neighbourhood to come and hear something that nearly concerned them, and was essential to their preservation. He then stood up in the midst of them, and having upbraided them with their barbarity, in leaving him and his companions to perish for want, he addressed them in these words, which he pronounced with emphasis as if he were inspired: *To punish you for this, the God whom I worship is going to strike you with his most terrible judgments. This very evening you will see the moon turn red, then grow dark and withhold her light from you. This will be only a prelude to your calamities, if you obstinately persist in refusing to give us food.*

THE admiral had scarce done speaking, when his prophecies were fulfilled. The savages were terrified beyond measure; they thought they were all lost; they begged for mercy, and promised to do any thing they should desire. They were then told, that heaven, moved with their repentance, was appeased, and that nature was going to resume her wonted course. From that moment, provisions were sent in from all quarters; and Columbus was never in want of any during the time he remained there.

It was Don Diego, the son of this extraordinary man, who fixed the Spaniards at Jamaica. In 1509, he sent thither seventy robbers from St. Domingo, under the command of John d'Esquimel; and others soon followed. It seemed as if they all went over to this delightful and peaceable island, for no other purpose than to spill human blood. Those barbarians never sheathed their sword while there was one inhabitant left to preserve the memory of a numerous, good-natured, plain and hospitable people. It was happy for the earth, that these murderers were not to supply their place. They had no inclination to multiply in an island where no gold was to be found. Their cruelty did not answer the purpose of their avarice; and the earth, which they had drenched with blood, seemed to refuse her assistance to second the barbarous efforts they had made to fix there. Every settlement raised upon the ashes of the natives grew unsuccessful, when labour and despair had completed the destruction of the few savages who had escaped the
fury

fury of the first conquests. That of St. Jago de la Vega was the only one that supported itself. The inhabitants of that town, plunged in idleness, the usual consequence of tyranny after devastation, were content with living upon the produce of some few plantations, and the overplus they sold to the ships that passed by their coasts. The whole population of the colony centered in the little spot that fed this race of destroyers, consisted of 1500 slaves, commanded by as many tyrants, when the English came and attacked the town, took it, and settled there in 1655.

THE English brought the fatal sources of discord along with them. At first, the new colony was only inhabited by three thousand of that fanatical militia, which had fought and conquered under the standards of the republican party. These were soon followed by a multitude of royalists, who were in hopes of finding rest and peace in America, or comfort after their defeat. The divisions which had prevailed for so long a time and with so much violence between the two parties in Europe, followed them beyond the seas. One party insolently triumphed in the protection of Cromwell, whom they had exalted upon the ruins of the throne: the other trusted to the governor of the island, who was himself a royalist in secret, though forced to bend under the authority that appointed him. This was sufficient to have renewed in America the scenes of horror and bloodshed which had so often been acted in England, had not Pen and Venables, the conquerors of Jamaica, given the command of

the island to the most prudent man among them, who happened to be the oldest officer. His name was Dudley, and he was a friend to the Stuarts. Twice did Cromwell appoint some of his own party in his stead, and Dudley was as often restored to his office by the death of his opponents.

THE conspiracies that were forming against him were discovered and frustrated. He never suffered the smallest breach of discipline to go unpunished ; and always kept the balance even between the faction his heart detested, and the party he was attached to. He excited industry ; and encouraged it by his attention, his advice, and his example. His authority was enforced by his disinterested behaviour. He never could be prevailed upon to accept of a salary, being content to live upon the produce of his own plantations. In private life, he was plain and familiar ; in office, an intrepid warrior, a steady and strict commander, and a wise politician. His manner of governing was altogether military, because he was obliged to restrain or to regulate an infant colony, wholly composed of soldiers ; and to prevent and repulse any invasion from the Spaniards, who might attempt to recover what they had lost.

BUT when Charles II. was called to the crown, by the nation that had deprived his father of it, a form of civil government was established at Jamaica, modelled, like those of the other islands, upon that of the mother-country. The governor represented the king ; the council the peers ; and three deputies

ties from each town, with two from every parish, constituted the commons. But the first exertions of this assembly were confined to a few temporary regulations, relative to the police, the administration of justice, and the finances, thrown together without any order. It was not till the year 1682 that the code of laws was drawn up, which to this day preserves the colony in all its vigour. Three of these wise statutes merit the attention of our political readers.

THE one, which provides for the defence of the country, warmly excites that very self-interest which might divert individuals from attending to it. It is enacted, that whatever mischief is done by the enemy, shall immediately be made good by the state; or at the expence of all the subjects, if the money found in the treasury should prove insufficient.

ANOTHER law concerns the means of increasing population. It enacts, that every ship-captain who brings a man into the colony, who is unable to pay for his passage, shall receive a general gratuity of twenty-two livres ten sols.* The particular gratuity is 168 livres fifteen sols† for every person brought from England or Scotland; 135 livres ‡ for every person brought from Ireland; seventy-eight livres fifteen sols§ for every person brought from the continent of America; and forty-five livres § for every person brought from the other islands.

* 19s. 8d. halfpenny.

† About 7l. 7s.

‡ 5l. 18s. 1d. halfpenny.

§ About 3l. 8s. 11d.

§ 1l. 19s. 4d. halfpenny.

THE third law tends to the encouragement of agriculture. When a proprietor of land is unable to pay either the interest or capital of the money he has borrowed, his plantation is appraised by twelve planters who are his equals. The creditor is obliged to take the estate in full payment, though the appraisement should fall short of the debt; but, if the value of the plantation exceeds the debt, he must then refund the overplus. This regulation, though it leaves room for partialities, furnishes a compensation for this evil, by the general good it produces of abating the rigour of the land-lord's and merchant's law-suits against the planter. The result of this disposition is in favour of lands and men in general. The creditor is seldom a sufferer, because he is upon his guard; and the debtor is more obliged to be vigilant and honest, if he means to find credit. Confidence then becomes the basis of all agreements; and confidence is only to be gained by the practice of virtue.

Jamaica
has enriched
itself
by the illegal
trade it
has carried
on with
Spanish
America.

THE colony had already acquired some degree of fame before these salutary laws had secured her prosperity. Some adventurers, as well from hatred and national jealousy, as from a restless disposition and want of fortune, attacked the Spanish ships. These pirates were seconded by Cromwell's soldiers, who, retaining nothing after his death, except that public aversion which their former successes had drawn upon them, went into America in quest of promotion, which they could never expect in Europe. These were joined by a multitude of Englishmen of both parties, accustomed to blood
by

by the civil wars which had ruined them. These men, eager for rapine and carnage, plundered the seas, and ravaged the coasts of America. Jamaica was the place where the spoils of Mexico and Peru were always brought by the English, and frequently by foreigners. They found in this island more ease, a better reception, protection, and freedom than any where else, whether for landing, or for spending as they pleased the spoils arising from their plunder. Here extravagance and debauchery soon plunged them again into indigence. This only incitement to their sanguinary industry, made them hasten to commit fresh depredations. Thus the colony reaped the benefit of their perpetual vicissitudes of fortune, and enriched itself by the vices which were both the source and the ruin of their wealth.

WHEN this destructive race became extinct, by reason of the frequency of the murders they committed, the funds they had left behind, and which, indeed, had been taken from usurpers still more unjust and cruel than themselves, proved a fresh source of opulence, by facilitating the means of opening a clandestine trade with the Spanish settlements. This vein of riches continued increasing; and especially towards the end of the century. Some Portuguese, with a capital of three millions *, of which the sovereign had advanced two thirds, engaged, in 1696, to furnish the subjects of the court of Madrid with 5000 blacks, each of the five years that their treaty was to last. This company
drew

* About 131,250*l*.

drew a great many of those slaves from Jamaica. From that time the colonists had constant connections with Mexico and Peru, either by means of the Portuguese agents, or by the captains of their own ships employed in this trade. But this intercourse was somewhat slackened by the war, which broke out on account of the succession to the throne of Spain.

At the peace, the Asiento treaty alarmed the people of Jamaica. They were afraid that the South-Sea company, which was appointed to furnish the Spanish colonies with negroes, would entirely exclude them from all access to the gold mines. All the efforts they made to break this regulation, could not produce any alteration in the measures of the English ministry. They wisely foresaw that the activity of the Asientists would prove a fresh motive of emulation for increasing the contraband trade formerly carried on. These views were so just, that in 1739 it was the general opinion, that Jamaica had drawn fifteen hundred millions of livres * from the Spanish West-Indies.

THIS illicit trade was carried on in a very simple manner. An English vessel pretended to be in want of water, wood, or provisions; that her mast was broken, or that she had sprung a leak, which could not be discovered or stopped without unloading. The governor permitted the ship to come into the harbour to refit. But, for form sake, and to disculpate himself to his court, he ordered a seal to be affixed to the door of the warehouse where

* 65,625,000*l*.

where the goods were deposited ; while another door was left unsealed, through which the merchandise that was exchanged in this trade was carried in and out by stealth. When the whole transaction was ended, the stranger, who was always in want of money, requested that he might be permitted to sell as much as would pay his charges ; and this was always granted, though with an appearance of great difficulty. This farce was necessary, that the governor or his agents might safely dispose in public of what they had previously bought in secret ; as it would always be taken for granted, that what they sold could be no other than the goods that were allowed to be bought. In this manner were the greatest cargoes disposed of.

THE court of Madrid thought to put a stop to these practices, by prohibiting the admission of all foreign ships into the Spanish harbours on any pretence whatever. But the people of Jamaica calling in force to the assistance of artifice, supported themselves in this trade under the protection of the English men of war, allowing the captain five *per cent.* upon every article of which he authorized the smuggling between the subjects of both crowns, and contrary to their treaty ; so true it is, that kings in vain enter into agreements that are inconsistent with the reciprocal interest of nations.

To this open violation of public order, has succeeded a more private and less alarming one. The ships dispatched from Jamaica repair to those ports of the Spanish coast which are least frequented ; especially

ally to those of Brew, five miles from Carthagena; and Grout, four miles from Porto-Bello. A man who speaks the language of the country is immediately put ashore, to give notice in the adjacent country of the arrival of the ships. The news is propagated with amazing speed to the most distant parts; the merchants hasten to the place, and the trade begins, but with such precautions as experience has taught them. The ship's company is divided into three parties. While the first is entertaining the purchasers, and treating them with great civilities, at the same time keeping a watchful eye to prevent them from exercising their inclination and dexterity in stealing; the second is employed in receiving the vanilla, indigo, cochineal, gold and silver of the Spaniards, in exchange for slaves, quicksilver, silks, and other commodities. The third division is in the mean while under arms upon deck, to provide for the safety of the ship; and to take care not to admit at once a greater number of men than can be kept in order.

WHEN the transactions are finished, the Englishman returns with his flock, which he has commonly doubled; and the Spaniard with his purchase, of which he hopes to make as great a profit, or greater. To prevent a discovery, he avoids the high roads, and goes through by-ways, with the negroes he has bought, who are loaded with the merchandise, which is divided into parcels of a convenient form and weight for carriage.

THIS manner of trading had been carried on successfully for a long time, to the great emolument

ment of the colonies of both nations; when, as Spain intended, it was greatly obstructed by substituting register-ships to the galleons. It has gradually diminished, and of late years was reduced to fifteen or sixteen hundred thousand livres * *per annum*. The British ministry, wishing to restore, or recover the profit of it, judged, in 1766, that the best expedient to repair the losses of Jamaica, was to make it a free port.

IMMEDIATELY the Spanish ships in America flocked thither from all parts, to exchange their gold and silver, and their commodities, for the manufactures of England. The year before this regulation, the exports from Great-Britain for this island had not exceeded 9,351,540 livres †; but this plan must increase them considerably. Freedom of trade is a great allurements to foreigners, and a great source of wealth to the nation that opens her ports.

If it had not been for the restriction which excludes all commodities of the same nature with those of Jamaica, it is most probable those of St. Domingo would have taken the same course as those of Mexico and Peru. What is the reason that the same government which is endeavouring to draw into one of its marts the productions of the French Windward islands, should deny an entrance to those of a Leeward island? Perhaps, it might be feared, that the subjects should find means to obtain from a rival, who can venture with impunity

* On an average about 67,800*l*.

† 415,379*l*. 17*s*. 6*d*.



punity to sell every thing at a lower price, those goods which should contribute to keep up their trade with the Spanish colonies.

WHETHER this conjecture is well or ill grounded, the English have not trusted so much to the readiness of the Spaniards to come to their ports, as to neglect other means of extending their commerce with them. The merchants of Jamaica had formerly settled some factories in the bay of Honduras, on the Black river, near the Musquito shore. For reasons unknown to us, they had forsaken them. They have now restored them, in the beginning of the year 1766, in hopes of supplying the inland provinces of Mexico with provisions; and if we are not misinformed, the success far surpasses their expectation.

Jamaica has enriched itself by its plantations still more than by its illegal trade.

YET this fraudulent and precarious trade is an inconsiderable matter compared to the immense riches which Jamaica has derived from its plantations. The first culture which the inhabitants attended to, was that of cocoa, which they found established by the Spaniards. It prospered as long as those plantations lasted; which had been cultivated by a people who made this their principal food and their only traffic. The new planters perceived that they began to decay, and they renewed them; but, either for want of care, or of skill in the new planters, the trees did not succeed. They grew tired of the culture, and applied themselves to that of indigo.

THIS production was increasing considerably, when the parliament laid a duty of three livres, eighteen

eighteen sols, six deniers,* upon every pound of indigo, which then sold for eleven livres five sols.† If this was evidently an immoderate duty at that time, it grew quite insupportable, when the competition of the French lowered the price of the commodity to four livres ten sols ‡ a pound. At this period all the indigo plantations fell throughout the English islands; and more especially at Jamaica. The government has since endeavoured to retrieve this loss; they have not only taken off the heavy load with which they had clogged that branch of industry, but have encouraged it by a bounty of eleven sols three deniers § upon every pound of indigo raised in the British settlements. This generosity has shewed itself too late, and has only occasioned abuses. In order to obtain the bounty, the Jamaica people procure indigo from St. Domingo, and then send it over to Great-Britain as the growth of their own plantation. This fraudulent traffic may amount to 1,200,000 livres|| a year.

THE expence the government is at on this account, cannot be looked upon entirely as a loss, since it is of use to the nation; but it keeps up that mistrust, and we may say, that propensity to fraud, which the spirit of finance has given rise to in most of our governments, between the state and the subjects. Ever since the prince has been incessantly contriving means to acquire money, the

* 3s. 5d. three farthings.

† 9s. 10d.

‡ 3s. 11d. one farthing.


§ About 6d.

|| 52,500l.

people have been studying artifices to elude the injustice of taxes, and to defraud the prince. When there has been on one side no moderation in the expences, no limit to taxations, no equity in the repartition, no lenity in the recovery ; there have been no longer any scruples about the violation of pecuniary laws on the other, nor any honesty in the payment of the duties, nor probity in the engagements between the subject and the government. Oppression hath prevailed on one hand, and plunder on the other ; the finance hath extorted from commerce, and commerce hath eluded or defrauded the finance. The treasury hath pillaged the planters, and the planters imposed upon the treasury by false entries. The colonist is tormented with taxes, services, and militias ; and he rejects this threefold bondage openly and by force when he is able ; and, when he is not, by clamours and complaints. If England does not supply us with all these instances of the faulty administration introduced by the spirit of finance, Europe can shew other states which too fully justify this picture.

THE culture of indigo was not yet totally given up at Jamaica, when that of cotton was undertaken. The American islands produce cotton shrubs of various sizes, which rise and grow up without any culture ; especially in low and marshy grounds. Their produce is of a pale red ; some paler than others ; but so short that it cannot be spun. None of this is brought to Europe, though it might be usefully employed in making of hats. The little

that is picked up, serves to make mattraffes and pillows.

BOOK
XIV.


THE cotton-shrub that supplies our manufactures, requires a dry and stony soil, and thrives best in grounds that have already been tilled. Not but that the plant appears more flourishing in fresh lands than in those which are exhausted; but, while it produces more wood, it bears less fruit.

A western exposition is fittest for it. The culture of it begins in March and April, and continues during the first spring-rains. Holes are made at seven or eight feet distance from each other, and a few seeds thrown in. When they are grown to the height of five or six inches, all the stems are pulled up, except two or three of the strongest. These are cropped twice before the end of August. This precaution is the more necessary, as the wood bears no fruit till after the second pruning; and, if the shrub was suffered to grow more than four feet high, the crop would not be the greater, nor the fruit so easily gathered. The same method is pursued for three years; for so long the shrub may continue, if it cannot conveniently be renewed oftener, with the prospect of an advantage that will compensate the trouble.

THIS useful plant will not thrive if great attention is not paid to pluck up the weeds that grow about it. Frequent rains will promote its growth; but they must not be incessant. Dry weather is particularly necessary in the months of March and April, which is the time of gathering the cotton, to prevent it from being discoloured and spotted.

THE cotton-shrub bears fruit within nine or ten months after it is planted. A flower blows at the extremity of its branches; and the pistil of this flower changes into a husk of the size of a pigeon's egg, which opens, and divides itself into three parts when the cotton is ripe.

WHEN it is all gathered in, the seeds must be picked out from the wool with which they are naturally mixed. This is done by means of a cotton-mill, which is an engine, composed of two rods of hard wood, about eighteen feet along, eighteen lines in circumference, and fluted two lines deep. They are confined at both ends, so as to leave no more distance between them, than is necessary for the seed to slip through. At one end is a kind of little mill-stone, which being put in motion with the foot, turns the rods in contrary directions. They separate the cotton, and throw out the seed contained in it.

WHILE the culture of cotton declined in the other English islands, it flourished more and more at Jamaica; but we may venture to foretell that it will fall. The parliament, that is to say the nation, who knows and administers its own revenues, seeing that the cotton of its own colonies was not sufficient to employ its manufactures, took off, in 1766, the duties which till that time had been imposed upon foreign cottons. The granting such a freedom as must necessarily increase the importation, and reduce the price, of an unwrought commodity, deserve the highest encomiums. Perhaps, a provident administration ought to have proceeded further,

ther, and have granted a temporary bounty upon all cottons imported from the national settlements, to obviate the discouragement which may arise from foreign competition, and from the reduced price of the commodity. But if the English are apprehensive of the decline of the culture of this article so important to their manufactures, they have no occasion for the same anxiety with regard to their ginger.

THIS plant, which never grows above two feet high, is rather bushy. Its leaves exactly resemble those of rushes, only they are smaller. It is propagated by one of its shoots, which is planted towards the end of the rainy season, and springs up in a week's time. When the leaves turn yellow and are withered, the ginger is ripe; it is then pulled up, and exposed to the sun or wind, to dry. The roots, which are the only useful part, are flat, broad, of different forms, but mostly resembling the foot of a goose. Their substance is close, heavy, white, firm, and of the consistence of a turnip.

THE culture of ginger is easy, and by no means expensive: a single man may undertake it alone. The root has this double advantage; that it will keep many years in the ground without rotting; and as long as we please after it is gathered, without being in the least injured. But, if ginger requires no great labour, it absorbs a vast quantity of nutritive juices; inasmuch, that a piece of ground which has bore three or four crops of

ginger, is so exhausted of salts, that nothing will thrive upon it.

WHEN first the Europeans came to the Caribbee-islands, the Caribs made use of ginger ; but their consumption in this and in every other article, was so small, that nature afforded them a sufficient quantity of it without the assistance of cultivation. The conquerors, notwithstanding the heat of the climate, grew passionately fond of this hot spice. They ate it in the morning to sharpen their appetite ; they served it up at table preserved in several different ways ; they used it after meals to facilitate digestion ; and at sea, as an antidote against the scurvy. This fashion was adopted in Europe, and ginger was used on every occasion ; it was commonly mixed with pepper, which was then very dear. This eastern production fell gradually to a lower price, and ginger grew out of repute. After bearing a considerable price, it sank towards the latter end of the century to ten livres a hundred *. In a short time there was no demand for it ; and this culture was dropped almost every where, except at Jamaica.

FOR the last thirteen years, it is computed that this island has exported, upon an average, 649,865 pounds weight a year. Most of it has been consumed in the British dominions ; the rest has been sold in the north, at a price which cannot tempt the colonies where the land is not in such plenty and of such little value as at Jamaica.

BESIDES

BESIDES ginger, this island furnishes Europe with a quantity of pimento. There are several forts, more or less pungent. The tree which bears that sort called Jamaica pepper, commonly grows upon the mountains, to the height of above thirty feet. It is very strait, moderately thick, and covered with a greyish, smooth, and shining bark. The leaves exactly resemble those of the laurel. The flowers blow at the extremities of the branches, and are succeeded by berries somewhat larger than those of the juniper. They are gathered green, and spread in the sun to dry. They turn brown, and acquire a spicy smell; from whence, in England, pimento is called all-spice. It is very useful to strengthen cold stomachs that are subject to crudities; but spices should be cultivated in Asia, and sugar in America.

THE art of managing this culture was unknown in Jamaica till the year 1668. It was brought thither by some inhabitants of Barbadoes. One of them was possessed of every requisite for that kind of produce that depends on man. His name was Thomas Modiford. His capital, together with his skill and activity, enabled him to clear an immense tract of land; and raised him, in time, to the government of the colony. Yet neither could the view of his fortune, nor his warm solicitations, prevail upon men accustomed to arms and idleness to apply to the labours of cultivation. Twelve hundred unfortunate men, who arrived in 1670 from Surinam, which had just been ceded to the Dutch, proved more tractable. Necessity inspired

them with resolution, and their example excited emulation. These beginnings of industry were happily supported by the quantity of money that was daily poured into Jamaica, from the uninterrupted success of the free-booters. Great part of it was employed in erecting buildings, purchasing slaves, implements of husbandry, and household goods for the rising plantations. The face of things was wholly changed. Jamaica soon exported vast quantities of sugar, superior in kind to that of the other English islands. This culture has never lessened, not even when that of coffee was joined to it.

THIS valuable plant, brought from the East Indies, enriched the Dutch and French settlements in America, before the English thought of appropriating it to themselves; and, indeed, it has been adopted only at Jamaica; but that island will soon furnish as much as the British dominions can consume. The mother-country has encouraged this culture, by enacting, that all foreign coffee, imported into her dominions, should pay six livres * more duty upon every hundred weight, than that imported from the produce of her own colonies.

THE commissioners for the plantations declared in the house of lords, in 1734, that the productions of Jamaica, imported the year before, amounted only to 12,138,748 livres, 1 sol, 6 deniers.† Their value hath since risen to 15,300,000 livres.‡ This revenue is produced by 25,000 hogshheads of sugar,

* 5s. 3d. † 531,070l. 4s. 6d. 3-4. ‡ 669,375l.

2000 bags of cotton, three millions weight of coffee, besides skins, ginger, woods for dying, and other less important articles. These are the fruits of the labour of 20,000 white men, and 90,000 blacks, gathered together in a few towns, or dispersed in nineteen parishes. The yearly government and defence of the colony amount to two millions of livres,* and in some particular circumstances much more. Its whole capital, in lands, slaves, houses, and moveables of every kind, has been estimated at 495,000,000 livres.† But it is a circumstance scarce credible, that only a small part of this wealth belongs to the proprietors of the plantations. Either by misfortunes, by extravagance, or by the ease with which they find credit, they have involved themselves in prodigious debts to the merchants settled on the island, and especially to the Jews. May that people, who at their first origin were slaves, and afterwards became conquerors, and who are now reduced to their former state of slavery, or become fugitives for these twenty centuries past, one day lawfully possess this or some other rich island of America; where they may collect all their children, and train them up in peace to husbandry and commerce, out of the reach of that fanaticism which has made them odious to the earth, and that persecution which has made them pay so dear for the errors of their worship! May the Jews at length live happy, free, and quiet, in some corner of the world, since they are our

* 87,500*l*.† 21,656,250*l*.

B.O.O.K.
XIV.

brethren by the ties of humanity, and our fathers
by the tenets of religion !

If we may believe the accounts of those who are well acquainted with the state of affairs at Jamaica, no less than two thirds of the estates belonging to the planters are mortgaged by the immense debts they have contracted. This evil must increase, unless it is prevented by a considerable and rapid augmentation of the plantations. Whether this success is possible or probable, shall be the subject of our next inquiry.

Is it possible that the produce of Jamaica should be multiplied?

UPON the most moderate computation, the extent of Jamaica appears to be four millions of acres, each 720 feet long, and 72 broad. It has been said that one third of this large space was inhabited and cultivated. The present state of the population and cultivation contradicts this assertion, though both are more flourishing than ever. All the inland part of the country is an uncultivated desert. There are no plantations except upon the coasts, and even these are not entirely cleared. Most of the planters possess immense lands, but hardly one fourth part of them is put to any use. All the labour is bestowed upon 200,000 acres at most.

WHEN we consider, that Jamaica has been long since inhabited by an industrious and skilful people; that the piratical war, and the contraband trade, have at all times poured immense treasures into the island; that the means of culture have never been wanting; that, for a long time past, recourse has been had to manure; that the roads and harbours are prodigiously multiplied for exportation; that the

the mother country and all Europe have received their produce ; and that, notwithstanding all these advantages, the land has never sold for more than one third of what it has produced in the other islands : when we consider maturely all these circumstances, we cannot avoid concluding, that the soil of Jamaica must be in general bad, or very indifferent.

THE sea-coasts, which, for the conveniency of transport, seem to claim the preference for sugar plantations, must be supposed to have had all the labour bestowed upon them, and to have been improved to the highest degree that they were capable of. The excessive and constant coolness of the mountains would be so injurious to all productions, and so destructive to the slaves employed, that it would be in vain to attempt any plantations there. The intermediate space between the mountains and the sea-coasts is often extremely dry, but at different distances it is interspersed with valleys, hills and plains, where it plainly appears that the Indians planted their maize, and the Spaniards bred their cattle. It may be presumed that these lands, properly managed, would yield abundance of cotton, coffee, cocoa, and indigo ; articles to which the English do not seem hitherto to have paid a proper attention. But these riches are not sufficient to make any colony flourish in the highest degree. Nothing will effect this at present in the American islands but sugar.

THOUGH this commodity is cultivated all round the island of Jamaica, it is more particularly so on the southern coast, which the Spaniards inhabited,
and

and where their conquerors have multiplied more than in any other part. Their inducement was a safe and commodious harbour, which can contain a thousand men of war. This inestimable advantage laid the foundation of Port Royal, which, though it stands on sandy ground that affords none of the necessaries of life, not even fresh water, became a famous city in less than thirty years. This splendour was owing to a constant and quick circulation of trade, formed by the commodities of the island, the captures of the free-booters, and the contraband trade carried on with the continent. There have been few cities in the world, where the thirst of wealth and pleasures had united more opulence and more corruption.

Jamaica
experiences
a great ca-
lamity.
Conse-
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trophe.

NATURE in one moment destroyed this beautiful appearance. The sky, which was clear and serene, at once grew obscured and red ; a rumbling noise was heard under ground, spreading from the mountains to the plain; the rocks were split; hills that were at a great distance came close together; infectious lakes appeared on the spots where whole mountains had been swallowed up; whole plantations were removed several miles from the place where they stood; enormous chasms were opened, from whence gushed out large columns of water that corrupted the air; many habitations disappeared, being either sunk into the caverns of the earth, or overturned. The sea was soon covered with trees, which the earth had thrown up, or the winds blown away. Thirteen thousand lives were lost by this dreadful earthquake, and three thousand

by

by a contagious distemper that broke out soon after. It is said that since this catastrophe of the 7th of June 1692, the climate of Jamaica is not so fine, the sky not so clear, nor the soil so fruitful, as it was before. The mountains are not so high, and the island is lower than it was. It is affirmed that most of the wells can be reached with ropes shorter by two or three feet than were required before this terrible event: a monument of the fragility of conquest, which should have taught the Europeans not to trust to the possession of a world that trembles under their feet, and seems to slip out of their rapacious hands.

B O O K
XIV.

IN this general overthrow, Port Royal was overflowed and destroyed; all the ships in the road were shattered to pieces, or thrown to a considerable distance upon dry land. But this city was too advantageously situated to be abandoned. The people had scarce recovered from their consternation, when they endeavoured to rebuild the town upon its ruins. But these labours were fruitless. The rising walls were again blown down by a hurricane. Port Royal, like Jerusalem, could never be rebuilt. The earth seemed only digged to swallow it up. By a singularity which baffles all human efforts and reasonings, the only houses that are left standing after this subversion, are situated upon a narrow slip of land, which advances several miles into the sea. Thus the land overturns edifices, to which the inconstant ocean furnishes as it were a solid foundation. These few buildings, which lie

open to invasion, are defended by one of the best fortresses in America.

THE inhabitants of Port Royal, discouraged by these repeated calamities, retired to Kingston, which is situated in the same bay. By their industry and activity, this town soon became a pleasant and flourishing city, and it is now the center of all the trade. If this is not so considerable as it was formerly at Port Royal, it is because the colony has not now the same connections abroad. The new mart lay too much exposed to secure the merchants from all uneasiness. It is but within these few years that it has been surrounded with works able to defend it from insult.

YET Kingston, notwithstanding it's progress, never became the capital of the island; this title is still given to St. Jago de la Vega, which the English have named Spanish town. It is situated some leagues from the sea, upon the river Cobra, which, though not navigable, is the finest in the island. This was the governor's residence, and the place where the general assembly and the courts of justice were held. The principal officers and the richest planters resided there. This concourse of inhabitants formed a more agreeable society there, enlivened the place, and introduced a greater number of conveniences, and a higher degree of luxury.

Such was the state of things in 1756; when Admiral Knowles judged it to be for the advantage of the colony, that the residence of the government should be removed to the spot where the trade was centered. His opinion was adopted by the legislative

tive body of the island, which resolved that for the future every thing relative to administration should be transacted at Kingston. Personal hatred against the projector of this plan; the harshness of the measures he employed to carry it into execution; the attachment most people are apt to take for places as well as things; numberless private interests that must necessarily be affected by this alteration: all these causes suggested to many persons unsurmountable objections to a plan, which was, indeed, liable to some inconveniencies, but was founded on answerable reasons, and attended with great advantages. The promoters of the new system, on their side, supported it with a contemptuous haughtiness. This opposition of sentiments produced two parties; and the animosity between them, which was violent at first, still continues to increase. These divisions are sufficient to inflame the whole colony. But it has much more to fear from a number of ferocious enemies, fixed in the center of the island, by whom it is incessantly threatened.

WHEN the Spaniards were compelled to cede Jamaica to the English, they left there a number of negroes and mulattoes, who, tired of their slavery, took a resolution to retire into the mountains, there to preserve that liberty which they had recovered by the expulsion of their tyrants. Having entered into some agreements necessary to preserve their union, they planted maize and cocoa in the most inaccessible places of their retreat. But the impossibility of subsisting till harvest, obliged them to come down into the plain, to pillage for sustenance. The con-

Jamaica has every thing to fear from a republic of negroes, whose independence she has been compelled to acknowledge.

querors bore this plunder the more impatiently, as they had nothing to spare, and declared war against them. Many were massacred; the greater part submitted; and only fifty or sixty fled back to the rocks, there to live or die in freedom.

POLICY, which sees every thing, but is never moved by compassion, thought it necessary utterly to exterminate or reduce this handful of fugitives, who had escaped from slavery or carnage; but the troops, who were either perishing or exhausted with fatigue, were averse from this destructive scheme, which must have occasioned the effusion of more blood. It was therefore dropt, for fear of a revolt. This condescension was attended with fatal consequences. All the slaves grown desperate by the hardships they underwent, or the dread of punishment, soon sought an asylum in the woods, where they were sure of meeting with companions ready to assist them. The number of fugitives increased daily. In a short time they deserted by troops, after having massacred their masters, and plundered and set fire to the habitations. In vain were active partizans sent out against them; to whom a reward of 900 livres * was offered for the head of every negro they should bring. This severity produced no alteration, and the desertion only became the more general.

THE rebels grew more daring as their numbers increased. Till the year 1690, they had only fled; but, when they thought themselves strong enough to attack, they fell upon the English plantations in

* 39l. 7s. 6d.

in separate bands, and committed horrid ravages. In vain were they driven back to their mountains with loss; in vain were forts erected and garrisoned at proper distances, to prevent their inroads; notwithstanding all this expence, and these precautions, they renewed their depredations from time to time. The resentment which the violation of the rights of nature by barbarous policy excited in these blacks, inspired them with such fury, that the white people who had bought them, in order, as they said, to cut off the root of the evil, resolved, in 1735, to employ all the forces of the colony, to destroy a justly implacable enemy.

IMMEDIATELY the military laws took place of all civil government. All the colonists formed themselves into regular bodies of troops. They marched towards the rebels by different roads. One party undertook to attack the town of Nauny, which the blacks themselves had built in the blue mountains. With cannon, a town built without regularity and defended without artillery, was soon destroyed; but the success of the other enterprises was frequently doubtful; sometimes attended with much loss. The slaves, more elated by one triumph than discouraged by ten defeats, were proud of considering their former tyrants merely as enemies they were to contend with. If they were beaten, they had at least some revenge. Their blood was at least mixed with that of their barbarous masters. They rushed against the sword of the European, to plunge a dagger into his breast. At last, overpowered by numbers, or by the dex-

terity of their antagonists, the fugitives intrenched themselves in inaccessible places, where they dispersed in small bands, fully determined never to stir out; and well assured that they should never be conquered. At length, after various battles and excursions, that lasted nine months, the English gave up all thoughts of subduing them.

Thus, sooner or later, will any people, made desperate by tyranny, or the oppression of conquerors, always get the better of numerous and well-disciplined armies; if they have but resolution enough to endure hunger rather than the yoke; to die rather than live in bondage; and, if they chuse, rather to see their nation extinct than enslaved. Let them abandon the field to the multitude of troops; to the train of war; to the display of provisions, ammunition, and hospitals: let them retire into the heart of the mountains, without baggage, without covering, without stores; nature will provide for them and defend them. There let them remain for years, till the climate, idleness, and intemperance, have destroyed those swarms of foreign invaders, who have no booty to expect, nor any laurels to gather. Let them now and then pour down upon them, like the torrents of their own mountains, surprize them in their tents, and ravage their out-lines. Lastly, let them despise the opprobrious names of robbers and murderers, which will be lavished upon them by people base enough to arm themselves against a handful of huntsmen, and weak enough to be unable to conquer them.

SUCH was the conduct of the blacks with the English. These, weary of excursions and fruitless armaments, fell into universal despondency. The poorest among them would not venture to accept the lands which the government offered them in the vicinity of the mountains. Even the settlements at a greater distance from these formidable slaves, were neglected or forsaken. Many parts of the island, which from their appearance, seemed likely to become the most fruitful, were left in their rude state; and the woods and thickets, with which they were covered, became the terror of the inhabitants, by affording a retreat to the rebels, who were now inured to war.

IN this situation was the colony, when Trelawney was appointed governor. This prudent and humane commander was sensible, that a set of men, who for near a century past lived upon wild fruits, went naked, and exposed to the inclemency of the weather; who, ever at war with an assailant stronger than themselves and better armed, never ceased fighting for the defence of their liberty; that such a set of men would never be subdued by open force. He, therefore, had recourse to pacific overtures. He offered them not only lands to cultivate, which should be their own property, but likewise liberty and independence. It was agreed that they should enjoy these privileges under chiefs, who, though chosen by themselves, should still hold their commissions of the governor of the island, and act under his direction. This plan, unheard of before among negroes, was ac-

cepted, and the treaty concluded in 1738, to the joy of both parties. It seemed to promise a lasting tranquillity; but there was a circumstance in the stipulation which laid the foundation of future disturbances.

WHILE Trelawney was negotiating this accommodation in the name of the crown, the general assembly of the colony had proposed their separate plan to the independent negroes. This was, that they should engage to harbour no more fugitive slaves, on condition that a stipulated sum should be paid them for every such deserter, whom they should inform against, or bring back to the colony. This agreement, repugnant to humanity, has certainly not been religiously observed. The parties have mutually accused each other of dishonesty. The negroes, but ill-paid in this shameful compact, have several times begun their ravages afresh.

WHETHER fired by their example, or exasperated at the ill usage they met with, the negro slaves resolved to be free likewise. While the flames of war kindled in Europe were spreading in America, these miserable men agreed, in 1760, to take up arms all in one day, murder their tyrants, and seize upon the government. But their impatience for liberty disconcerted the unanimity of the plot by preventing the timely execution of it. Some of the conspirators stabbed their masters, and set fire to their houses before the appointed time; but finding themselves unable to resist the whole force of the island, which their premature exploit had collected in a moment, they

fled to the mountains. From this impenetrable recess they were incessantly making destructive inroads. The English, in their distress, were reduced to solicit the assistance of the wild negroes, whose dependence they had been obliged to acknowledge by a solemn treaty. They even bribed them, and promised a certain sum for every slave they should kill with their own hands. Those base Africans, unworthy of the liberty they had recovered, were not ashamed to sell the blood of their brethren : they pursued them, and killed many of them by surprize. At last the conspirators, weakened and betrayed by their own nation, remained a long time silent and inactive.

THE conspiracy was thought to be effectually extinguished, when it broke out again with redoubled fury. The numbers had increased by deserters from the several plantations. The regular troops, the militia, and a large body of sailors, all marched in pursuit of the slaves ; they fought and beat them in several skirmishes ; many were slain, or taken prisoners, and the rest dispersed into the woods and rocks. All the prisoners were shot, hanged, or burnt. Those who were supposed to be the chief promoters of the conspiracy, were tied alive to gibbets, and there left to perish slowly, exposed to the scorching sun of the torrid zone ; a far more painful and more terrible death than that of being burnt alive. Yet their tyrants enjoyed the torments of these miserable wretches, whose only crime was an attempt to recover by revenge

those rights of which avarice and inhumanity had deprived them.

THE measures that were taken to prevent future insurrections, were dictated by the same spirit of barbarity. A slave is whipped in the public places if he plays at any game whatsoever; if he presumes to go a hunting, or to sell any thing but milk or fish. He cannot stir out of his master's plantation, unless attended by a white man, or with an express permission in writing. If he beats a drum, or makes use of any other noisy instrument, his master is condemned to pay a penalty of 225 livres.* Thus do the English, who are so jealous of their own liberty, sport with that of other men. To this excess of barbarity the negro trade must necessarily have brought these usurpers. Such is the progress of injustice and violence. To conquer the new world, its inhabitants must doubtless have been slaughtered. To replace them, negroes must be bought, as they alone are able to endure the climate and the labours of America.

To remove these Africans from their native country, who were designed to cultivate the land without having any possessions in it, it was necessary to seize them by force, and make them slaves. To keep them in subjection, they must be treated with severity. To prevent their revolt, the natural consequence of severity and servitude, these men, whom we have made desperate, must be restrained by capital punishments, by hard usage, and atrocious laws.

BUT

* 9l. 16s. 10d. half-penny.

BUT cruelty itself has a period in its own destructive nature. In an instant it may cease. An enemy who should be so fortunate as to land at Jamaica, would soon convey arms to these men, who are full of rancour against their oppressors, and only wait a favourable opportunity to rise against them. The French, not considering that the revolt of the blacks in one colony would probably occasion it in all the rest, will hasten such a revolution in time of war. The English, finding themselves between two fires, will be dismayed; their strength and courage will fail them; and Jamaica will fall a prey to slaves and conquerors, who will contend for dominion with fresh enormities. Such is the train of evils that injustice brings along with it! It attaches itself to man so closely, that the connection cannot be dissolved but by the sword. Crimes beget crimes; blood is productive of blood; and the earth becomes a perpetual scene of desolation, tears, misery and affliction, where successive generations rise to imbrue their hands in blood, to tear out each other's bowels, and to lay each other in the dust.

THE loss of Jamaica, however, would be a heavy one for England. Nature has placed this island at the entrance of the gulph of Mexico, and made it a kind of key to that rich country. All ships going from Carthagená to the Havannah, are obliged to pass by its coasts; it is more within reach of the several trading ports on the continent, than any other island; the many excellent roads with which it is surrounded, facilitate the launching of men of

Advantages of Jamaica for war. Its disadvantages for navigation.

HISTORY OF SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE

war on all sides of the island. These several advantages are balanced by some inconveniencies.

If it is easy to get at Jamaica by the trade winds, by taking the less Antilles, it is not so easy to get out, whether we go through the streights of Bahama, or determine for the leeward passage.

THE first of these two ways gives the full advantage of the wind for two hundred leagues; but as soon as Cape St. Anthony is doubled, we meet the same wind against us that before was favourable: so that more time is lost than was gained; and there is also a risque of being taken by the guarda-costas of the Havannah. This danger is succeeded by another, which is the shoals on the coast of Florida, towards which the winds and currents drive with great violence. The Elizabeth, an English man of war, would infallibly have been lost there in 1746, had not Captain Edwards ventured into the Havannah. It was during the heighth of the war; and the port belonged to the enemy. "I come," said the captain to the governor, "to deliver up my ship, my sailors, my soldiers, and myself, into your hands; I only ask the lives of my men." "I will not be guilty of any dishonourable action," replied the Spanish commander. "Had we taken you in fight, in open sea, or upon our coasts, your ship would have been ours, and you would have been our prisoners. But as you are overtaken by a storm, and are driven into this port from the fear of being shipwrecked, I do and ought to forget that my nation is at war with yours. You are men, and so are we; you
" are

“ are in distress, and have a right to our pity. You
 “ are at liberty to unload and refit your vessel;
 “ and if you want it, you may trade in this port
 “ to pay your charges; you may then go away,
 “ and you will have a pass to carry you safe be-
 “ yond the Bermudas. If after this you are taken,
 “ you will be a lawful prize; but at this moment,
 “ I see in Englishmen, only strangers for whom hu-
 “ manity claims our assistance.” It is in this in-
 stance that we discover Spanish generosity.

The other way is attended with no less difficulty and danger. It terminates at a small island, that the English call crooked island, which lies eighty leagues off Jamaica. Ships that come this way must commonly strive against the easterly wind through the whole passage, coast along close under St. Domingo, in order to keep clear of the flats of Cuba, and then pass the streights, between the points of these two great islands, where it is very difficult to escape being intercepted by their privateers or their men of war. The navigators coming from the Lucay's do not meet with these obstructions.

THESE islands, the first which Columbus discovered in America, are four or five hundred in number. Most of them are no more than rocks just above water. Some were inhabited by savages, who were all sent to perish in the mines of St. Domingo. Not one of them had a single inhabitant in 1672, when the English landed a few men on that called Providence, who were all destroyed by the Spaniards seven or eight years after. This
 disaster

Settlement
of the Eng-
lish at
Lucays or
Bahama
islands.

disaster did not deter other Englishmen from settling there in 1690. They had scarce built 160 houses, when the French and Spaniards jointly attacked them in 1703, destroyed their plantations, and carried off their negroes. The colonists, discouraged by the total loss of their substance, removed to other places to seek employment, and were succeeded by pirates of their nation; who, after exercising their piracies on the coasts of Africa, in the remotest seas of Asia, and chiefly in the latitudes of North-America, found a safe and commodious retreat in the island. Here they continued for a long time, insulting even the British flag with impunity, till George I. roused by the clamours of his people, and the wishes of his parliament, in 1719, fitted out a sufficient force to subdue them. The greater part accepted the proffered amnesty, and increased the colony which Woods Rogers brought with him from Europe.

It may now consist of 3000 persons; half of whom are settled at Providence, and the rest dispersed in the other islands. Accustomed to live upon plunder, they retained too much of their former dispositions; and this accounts for the negligent and languid state of their agriculture; though the variety of their soil is a constant incentive to their industry, their ambition, and even their caprices. It is well known, that, in general, it is not fertile; but there are parts sufficiently rich to insure the prosperity of a greater population. These islands, which for want of productions have hitherto been useless to Great-Britain, may in time

be serviceable from their situation, if not by their trade.

THE Lucays, which on one side are separated from Florida only by the channel of Bahama, form on the other a long chain, which terminates nearly at the point of Cuba. There some other islands, called Caicos, and Turks island, lately brought under the yoke of the English navy, begin; and which continue the chain as far as the middle of the northern coast of St. Domingo. Between these several islands, there are five passages for first-rate ships. Turk's island, and the great Caicos, have lately been fortified by the English, so that they afford a good anchorage, and a safe retreat to their privateers, and command the narrow channel, which divides them from St. Domingo. By this means most of the ships coming from that rich island must fall into the hands of the English. If these have not built any forts on the other islands, it is because they think the superiority of their manœuvres is sufficient without this assistance, to intercept this passage to the ships of their rivals. They are not so sanguine in their expectations with regard to Bermudas.

THIS cluster of islands, distant about 300 leagues from the Antilles, was discovered in 1527, by the Spaniard John Bermudas, who gave them his name, but did not land there. Never had this group of islands been inhabited by any human being, when sixty Englishmen landed there in 1612. The population increased considerably, because the advantages of the

Settlement
of the Eng-
lish at the
Bermudas.

the climate were greatly exaggerated. Inhabitants resorted thither from the Antilles for the recovery of their health; and from the northern colonies, to enjoy their fortune in peace. Many royalists retired there in expectation of the death of their oppressor Cromwell. Waller, among the rest, that charming poet, who was an enemy to that tyrannical deliverer, crossed the seas, and celebrated those fortunate islands, inspired by the influence of the air, and the beauty of the country, which are always favourable to the poet. He imparted his enthusiasm to the fair sex. The English ladies never thought themselves handsome or well dressed, unless they had small Bermuda hats made with palm leaves.

BUT at last the charm was broken, and these islands fell into that contempt which their insignificance deserved. They are very numerous, and their whole compass is but six or seven leagues. The soil is very indifferent, and there is not a single spring to water it. There is no water to drink but what is taken from wells and reservoirs. Maize, vegetables, and excellent fruits, afford plenty of wholesome food; but they have no superfluous commodities for exportation; yet chance has collected under this pure and temperate sky, four or five thousand inhabitants; poor, but happy in being unobserved. They have no outward connections except by some ships passing from the northern to the southern colonies, which sometimes stop to take refreshments in these peaceful islands.

SOME attempts have been made to improve the fortunes of these people by industry. It has been wished that they would try to cultivate silk ; then cochineal ; and, lastly, that they would plant vineyards. But these projects have been only thought of. These islanders, consulting their own happiness, have confined their sedentary arts to the weaving of sails. This manufacture, so well adapted to plain and moderate men, grows daily more and more flourishing.

FOR upwards of a century past, ships have also been built at the Bermudas, that are not to be equalled for swiftness and durableness ; and are in great request, especially by pirates. They are made of a kind of cedar, called by the French Acajou. It hath been tried to imitate them at Jamaica and in the Bahama islands, where there were plenty of materials, which were grown scarce and dear in the old docks ; but these ships are, and must be far inferior to their models.

THE principal inhabitants of the Bermuda islands have formed a society in 1765, the statutes of which are, perhaps, the most respectable monument that ever dignified humanity. These virtuous citizens have engaged themselves to form a library of all books of husbandry, in whatever language they have been written ; to procure to all capable persons of both sexes, an employment suitable to their disposition ; to bestow a reward on every man who has introduced into the colony any new art, or contributed to the improvement of any one already known ;



known ; to give a pension to every daily workman, who, after having assiduously continued his labour, and maintained a good character for forty years, shall not have been able to lay by a stock sufficient to allow him to pass his latter days in quiet ; and lastly, to indemnify every inhabitant of Bermuda, who shall have been oppressed either by the minister or the magistrate.

May these advantages ever be preserved to these industrious, though indigent people ; happy in their labour and in their poverty, which keeps their morals untainted ! They enjoy in a state of innocence the benefits of a pure and serene sky. The poison of luxury has never infected them. They are not themselves addicted to envy, nor do they excite it in others. The rage of ambition and war is extinguished upon their coasts, as the storms of the ocean that surround them are broken. The virtuous man would willingly cross the seas to enjoy the sight of their frugality. They are totally unacquainted with what passes in the part of the world we live in ; and it will be happy for them to remain in their ignorance.

ENGLAND drew from all her flourishing colonies only a sufficient quantity of sugar for her own consumption ; part of the coffee and cotton she wanted ; but neither cocoa, nor indigo. The late war, by extending her empire in the new world, has enriched her commerce with some additional articles of exportation.

AT the head of her new acquisitions stands the island of Tobago, which measures about thirty leagues round. It is not, as most of the other Caribbee islands, full of barren rocks, or unwholesome morasses. Plains of considerable extent, and without any inequalities, are here crowned with hills, whose gentle ascent is every where fit for cultivation. From these hills flow innumerable springs; most of which seem purposely intended to turn the sugar-mills. The soil, which is sometimes sandy, is constantly black and deep. There are safe and commodious harbours along the north and west sides of the island, which is not exposed to those dreadful hurricanes that are so destructive in other parts. Possibly, it owes this inestimable advantage to the vicinity of the continent.

B O O K
XIV.

The English take possession of the island of Tobago, which had been occupied by the Dutch and by the French.

TOBAGO has formerly been exceedingly populous, if we may credit tradition; but its authority is rather doubtful. The inhabitants long withstood the fierce and frequent attacks of the savages from the continent, who were stubborn and irreconcilable enemies. At length, wearied out with these inroads, which were incessantly renewed, they dispersed into the adjacent islands.

THAT which they had forsaken lay open to invasion from Europe, when two hundred natives of Flessingen landed there in 1632, to lay the foundation of a Dutch colony. The neighbouring Indians joined with the Spaniards of Trinity island, to oppose an establishment that gave umbrage to both. Whoever attempted to stop their fury, was murdered

murdered or taken prisoner ; and the few who escaped into the woods soon deserted the island.

FOR twenty years the Dutch forgot a settlement which was only noted for the disasters of its origin. In 1654, a fresh colony was sent there, which was driven away in 1666. The English were soon deprived of this conquest by the French ; but Lewis XIV. satisfied with having conquered it, restored it to his ally the republic of Holland. This settlement succeeded no better than the other colonies of that commercial nation that were engaged in agriculture. The motives that determine so many persons from other countries to go to America, ought never to have influenced the Dutch. Their own country affords every possible advantage for trade, and they have no need to go abroad to make their fortune. A happy toleration, purchased like their liberty, with rivers of blood, hath at length left the consciences of all men free ; so that no religious scruples can induce timorous minds to banish themselves from their native country. The government makes such ample provision for the relief and employment of the poor, that none are driven by despair to go and clear a foreign land which usually destroys the first cultivators. Tobago, therefore, never had more than 1200 men, employed in the culture of a little tobacco, cotton and indigo, and of six sugar plantations.

THE colony was confined to this scanty exertion of industry, when it was attacked by the very same nation that had restored it to its former rights of possession

possession and property. In the month of February 1677, a French fleet, destined to seize upon Tobago, fell in with the Dutch fleet that was sent out to oppose this expedition. They engaged in the very road of the island, which became famous from this memorable action in an age abounding with great events. The obstinacy and valour on both sides was such, that the fight still continued, when every ship was dismasted, and unrigged, and no sailors left to work them. The engagement did not cease till twelve vessels were burnt, and a great number sunk. The assailers lost the fewest men, and the defendants kept possession of the island.

BUT d'Estrees, who was determined to take it, landed there the same year in the month of December. There was then no fleet to obstruct or retard his progress. A bomb thrown from his camp, blew up their powder magazine. This proved, as it generally does, a decisive stroke; and the enemy, unable to resist, surrendered at discretion. The conquerors availed themselves to the utmost of the right of war: not content with razing the fortifications, they burnt the plantations, seized upon all the ships in the harbour, and transported the inhabitants from the island. The conquest of this place was secured to France by the peace that soon followed an action, in which defeat was attended with no marks of disgrace and victory with no advantage.

The court of Versailles neglected this important island to such a degree, as not to send a single man thither. Perhaps, in the intoxication of false

grandeur, they beheld with indifference whatever was merely useful. They even entertained an unfavourable opinion of Tobago, and imagined it was only a barren rock. This error gained ground from the behaviour of the French, who, finding themselves too numerous at Martinico, went over to the islands of St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Dominica. These were precarious possessions, and whose soil was of an indifferent quality. Could they possibly have been preferred to an island where the land was better, and the property incontestable? Such was the reasoning of a government, which was not then sufficiently enlightened concerning the trade and plantations of the colonies, to discern the true motives of this dislike the subjects had to Tobago.

AN infant colony, especially when it is founded with slender means, cannot subsist without immediate assistance. It cannot make any progress but in proportion as it finds consumption for its first productions. These are generally of a common sort, are not worth the expences of exportation to any distance, and, therefore, will scarce sell but in the neighbourhood, and ought insensibly, and by moderate profits, to lead to the undertaking of those great cultures which are the object of commerce between Europe and the Leeward islands. But Tobago was too remote from the French settlements, to attract inhabitants by such a gradation of success. Less fruitful islands, that were nearer to their resources, were preferred.

THE low condition into which it was fallen did not prevent it from attracting the attention of England. That proud island, which thinks herself the queen of all others because she is the most flourishing, pretended to have an undoubted right to that of Tobago, because it had once been in her possession for six months. Her forces have confirmed her pretensions ; and the peace of 1763, has justified the success of her arms, by ceding to her a possession, which she will turn to better account than the French ever did.

ALMOST all the settlements in the Antilles have proved fatal to the first colonists, who, acting by chance in times of little experience, without the concurrence of the mother-country, committed perpetual blunders. Their avidity would not suffer them to follow the method of the natives, who, to abate the influence of a constant scorching sun, used to separate the small parcels of land which they were forced to clear, with large spaces covered with trees and shady thickets. These savages, instructed by experience, fixed their dwellings in the middle of the woods, to preserve themselves from the quick and dangerous exhalations of a ground newly turned up.

THE destroyers of this prudent people, being too eager after their profits, neglected this method as too slow ; and being impatient to cultivate all, precipitately cut down whole forests. Thick vapours immediately arose from the ground, which was heated, for the first time, by the rays of the sun. These increased as the earth was stirred up

for sowing and planting. Their malignant particles insinuated themselves into every pore, and every organ of the husbandman; who, by hard labour, was constantly kept in a profuse perspiration. The circulation of the fluids was stopped, all the viscera were dilated, the body swelled, the stomach could no longer perform its functions, and death ensued. Those who escaped these pestilential influences by day, lost their lives by sleeping in huts hastily run up upon a fresh soil, where vegetation was too active, and so unwholesome that it consumed the men before it could nourish the plants.

FROM these observations it appears, that the following would be the best plan which could be pursued in the establishing of a new colony. At our first arrival, it should be observed what winds are most prevalent in the Archipelago of America, and it will be found that they blow regularly from the south-east and north-east. If we were at liberty to chuse, and met with no obstacle from the nature of the ground, we should take care not to fix on the leeward side, lest the wind should be continually bringing to us the vapours of the new-tilled grounds, and infect, from the exhalations of the new plantations, a piece of land that might have been purified in time. Our colony should, therefore, be founded on the windward side of whatever country we mean to cultivate. First, all the habitations should be built in the wood, and not a tree be suffered to be felled about them. The woods are wholesome; the refreshing shade they afford, and the cool air we breathe in them even in
the

the heat of the day, are a preservative against that excessive perspiration, which is the destruction of most Europeans, by the dryness and acrimony of an inflammable blood, deprived of its fluid parts. Fires should be kept in the huts all night, to dispel any noxious air that might have entered. This custom, which is constantly practised in some parts of Africa, would be as successful in America, considering the analogy between the two climates.

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AFTER having taken these precautions, we might begin to cut down the woods; but it should be at least at fifty toises distance from the huts. When the ground is laid bare, the slaves should not be sent out to their work till ten o'clock in the morning, when the sun has had time to divide the vapours, and the wind to drive them away. The four hours lost after sun-rise, would be fully compensated by sparing the strength of the labourers, and the preservation of the human race. This attention should be continued as long as any lands are clearing or sowing, till the ground was thoroughly purged and settled; when the colonists might be allowed to fix upon it, and be employed without the least apprehensions at all hours in the day. Experience has already justified the necessity of all these measures.

THE English having first settled on the leeward side of Tobago, they died in great numbers, and lost a great number of slaves, though they all came at the same time from the neighbouring colonies. Having acquired knowledge by this misfortune, they removed to windward, and the mortality

ceased. This settlement, which was to have been entered upon immediately after the peace, has been greatly retarded, because the custom that prevails in England, of selling the lands of their islands, is attended with numberless forms, which have delayed the clearing of them. It was not till the year 1766 that 400,000 acres of land have been allotted, divided into lots of 500 acres each. A second allotment has since been made; but, in both, no one planter has been allowed to purchase more than one lot. This law has extended to St. Vincent and Dominica; with this difference only, that in the last island the lots were only of 300 acres. In all the three acquisitions, the land has sold but for 22, or 28 livres * an acre. One fifth of the sum was paid down at the time; ten *per cent.* the two first years, and afterwards twenty *per cent.* till the whole was discharged. Every planter is also obliged to fix a white man and two white women upon his plantation for every hundred acres he shall clear. But here a difficulty occurs. The English, by putting two women and but one man upon a plantation, bring themselves into the dilemma of either leaving one woman without a husband, or giving two wives to the man. This is either admitting polygamy, which christianity forbids; or celibacy, which protestants will not allow: for it is not to be supposed that in America the English will chuse to intermarry with the blacks. However this may be, every planter must

* 19s. 3d. or 1l. 4s. 6d.

must comply with this injunction, or forfeit 450 livres * for every woman, and double that sum for every man that is wanting. BOOK
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NOTWITHSTANDING this kind of restraint, the disposition of the English leaves no room to doubt, but that Tobago will emerge in their hands from the utmost wretchedness, and rise to the greatest degree of prosperity. At that brilliant period, it will surpass all the possessions they have acquired in America, in the excellence and the abundance of its productions. Those speculators who are best acquainted with the nature of the soil, and best able to judge what it is capable of producing in proportion to its extent, make no scruple to affirm, that the island will yield 50,000 hogheads of raw sugar annually to the mother country, besides other articles of less value. In short, it will surpass Jamaica, and increase the wealth of Granada.

THE island of Granada lies to leeward of Tobago, is but nine or ten leagues long, seven broad in the widest part, and twenty or twenty-two in circumference. Its plains are intersected by a few mountains of a moderate height, and a prodigious number of pretty considerable springs. There is so capacious a harbour to leeward, that sixty men of war may ride there with ease, and with so much safety, that they might save themselves the trouble of casting anchor.

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THOUGH the French, acquainted with the fertility of Granada, had formed, as early as the year 1638, the project of settling there, yet they never

* 19l. 13s. 9d.

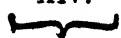
carried it into execution till the year 1651. At their arrival, they gave a few hatchets, some knives, and a barrel of brandy to the chief of the savages they found there; and imagining they had purchased the island with these trifles, assumed the sovereignty, and soon acted as tyrants. The Caribs, unable to contend with them by open force, took the method which weakness always inspires to repel oppression; they murdered all whom they found alone and defenceless. The troops that were sent to support the infant colony, found no safer or more expeditious way than to destroy all the natives. The remainder of these miserable savages took refuge upon a steep rock, preferring rather to throw themselves down alive from the top of it, than to fall into the hands of an implacable enemy. The French inconsiderately called this rock *le morne des sauteurs*, the hill of the leapers, and it still retains that name.

THEY were justly punished for all these cruelties by a rapacious, violent, and inflexible governor. Most of the colonists, no longer able to endure his tyranny, retired to Martinico, and those who remained on the island condemned him to death after a formal trial. In the whole court of justice that tried this miscreant, there was only one man who could write, and his name was Archangeli. A farrier was the person that impeached, who, instead of the signature, sealed with a horseshoe, and Archangeli, who performed the office of clerk, wrote gravely round it: *marque de Monsieur de la*

Brie, conseiller rapporteur. MARK OF MR. DE B BOOK
 LA BRIE, COUNCIL FOR THE COURT. XIV.

IT was apprehended that the court of France would not ratify this extraordinary sentence, passed with such unusual formalities, though dictated by common sense. Most of the judges of the crime, and witnesses of the execution disappeared from Granada. None remained, except those whose obscurity screened them from the pursuit of the laws. The estimate taken in 1700 shews, that there were on the island no more than 251 white people, 53 free savages or mulattoes, and 525 slaves. The useful animals were reduced to 64 horses, and 569 head of horned cattle. The whole culture consisted of three plantations of sugar, and fifty-two of indigo.

THE face of things was totally changed towards the year 1714; and this alteration was effected by Martinico. That island was then laying the foundation of a splendour that was to astonish all nations. It sent immense productions to France, and received valuable commodities in return. The richest of these were sent to the Spanish coasts. Its ships touched at Granada in their way, to take in refreshments. The trading privateers, who undertook this navigation, taught the people of that island the value of their soil, which only required cultivation. The execution of every project is facilitated by commerce. Some traders furnished the inhabitants with slaves and utensils to erect sugar plantations. An open account was established between the two colonies. Granada was clearing its debts



debts gradually by its rich produce, and the balance was on the point of being closed, when the war in 1744 interrupted the communication between the two islands, and at the same time stopped the progress of the sugar plantations. This loss was supplied by the culture of coffee, which was pursued, during the hostilities, with all the activity and eagerness that industry could inspire.

THE peace of 1748 revived all the labours, and opened all the former sources of wealth. In 1753, the population of Granada consisted of 1,262 white people; 175 free negroes; and 11,991 slaves. The cattle amounted to 2,298 horses or mules; 2,456 head of horned cattle; 3,278 sheep; 902 goats; and 331 hogs. The cultivation rose to 83 sugar plantations; 2,725,600 coffee trees; 150,300 cocoa trees, and 800 cotton plants. The provisions consisted of 5,740,450 trenches of cassada; 933,596 banana trees, and 143 squares of potatoes and yams. The colony made a rapid progress in proportion to the excellence of its soil. Those obstinate fevers and drop-sies, which for thirty years had consumed the men as fast as they cut down the woods, would have subsided when the whole had been cleared; a labour in which the colonist lost his life by endeavouring to preserve it. But the French have lost their hopes and their treasures. They will no longer enjoy the wealth of Granada. They deserve, however, the misfortunes that have baffled their too tardy precautions. They are passionately fond of premature and unbounded enjoyment:

that malady, which has tainted the government of a nation which yet deserves the affection of her masters; that prodigality, which reaps when it should sow; which destroys the past with one hand, and the future with the other; which exhausts and consumes the stock by anticipating the income; that confusion, which results from the distresses any state must necessarily be reduced to that has neither principles nor experience, that has powers and no views, means, and no conduct; that anarchy which prevails at the helm; that precipitation, that caballing among inferiors; the impropriety or total want of projects; on one hand, the audacity of doing any thing with impunity; on the other, the fear of speaking, even for the public good: this long train of evils has thrown Granada into the hands of the English, who are in possession of this conquest by the treaty of 1763. But how long will they keep this colony? Or, will it never again be restored to France?

ENGLAND has not made a fortunate beginning. In the first enthusiasm raised by an acquisition of which the highest opinion had been previously formed, every one was eager to purchase estates there. They sold for much more than their real value. This caprice, by expelling old colonists, who were inured to the climate, has sent thirty-five or thirty-six millions of livres * out of the mother country. This imprudence has been followed by another. The new proprietors, misled no doubt

* On an average about 1,553,000*l*.

by national pride, have substituted new methods to those of their predecessors. They have attempted to alter the mode of living among their slaves. The negroes, who, from their very ignorance, are more attached to their old customs than other men, have revolted. It hath been found necessary to send out troops, and to shed blood. The whole colony was filled with suspicions. The masters, who had laid themselves under a necessity of using violent methods, were afraid of being burnt or massacred in their own plantations. The labours have declined, or been totally interrupted. Tranquillity has at length been restored. The number of slaves has been increased as far as 40,000; and the produce has been raised to the treble of what it was under the French government.

THE plantations will still be improved by the neighbourhood of a dozen of islands, called the Granadines, that are dependent on the colony. They are from three to eight leagues in circumference. They do not afford a single spring of water. The air is wholesome; the ground covered only with thin bushes, has not been screened from the sun: it exhales none of those noxious vapours which are fatal to the husbandman.

CARIACOU, the only one of the Granadines which the French have occupied, was at first frequented by turtle fishermen, who, in the leisure afforded them by so easy an occupation, employed themselves in clearing the ground. In process of time their small number was increased by the accession of some of the inhabitants of Guadalupe, who
finding

finding that their plantations were destroyed by a peculiar sort of ants, removed to Cariacou. The island flourished from the liberty that was enjoyed there. The inhabitants collected about twelve hundred slaves, by whose labours they made themselves a revenue of four or five hundred thousand livres * in cotton.

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THE other Granadines do not afford the prospect of the same advantages, though the plantation of sugar is begun there. It has succeeded remarkably well at Becouya, the largest and most fertile of these islands, which is no more than two leagues distant from St. Vincent.

WHEN the English and French, who for some years had been ravaging the Windward islands, began to give some consistence to their settlements, in the year 1660, they agreed that Dominica and St. Vincent should be left to the Caribs as their property. Some of these savages, who till then had been dispersed, retired into the former, and the greater part into the latter. There these mild and moderate men, lovers of peace and silence, lived in the woods, in scattered families under the guidance of an old man, whom his age alone had advanced to the dignity of ruler. The dominion passed successively into every family, where the oldest always became king, that is to say, the guide and father of the nation. These ignorant savages were still unacquainted with the sublime art of subduing and governing men by force of arms; of massacring the inhabitants of a country

The English take possession of St. Vincent. Customs of the savages they found in this island.

* On an average 19,690l.

to get possession of their lands ; of granting to the conquerors the property, and to the conquered the labours of the conquered country ; and in process of time, of depriving both of the rights and the fruit of their toil by arbitrary taxes.

THE population of these children of nature was suddenly augmented by a race of Africans, whose origin was never positively ascertained. It is said that a ship carrying negroes for sale foundered on the coast of St. Vincent ; and the slaves who escaped the wreck, were received as brethren by the savages. Others pretend that these negroes were deserters, who ran away from the plantations of the neighbouring colonies. A third tradition says, that this foreign race comes from the blacks that the Caribs took from the Spaniards, in the first wars between those Europeans and the Indians. If we may credit Du Tertre, the most ancient historian that has written an account of the Antilles, those terrible savages, who were so inveterate against their masters, spared the captive slaves, brought them home, and restored them to liberty that they might enjoy life, that is, the common blessings of nature, which no man has a right to withhold from any of his fellow-creatures.

THEIR kindness did not stop here : for by whatever chance these strangers were brought into the island, the proprietors of it gave them their daughters in marriage ; and the race that sprang from this mixture, were called black Caribs. They have preserved more of the primitive colour of their fathers, than of the lighter hue of their mothers.

thers. The red Caribs are of a low stature; the black Caribs tall and stout; and this doubly savage race speak with a vehemence that seems to resemble anger.

IN process of time, however, some differences arose between the two nations. The people of Martinico perceiving this, resolved to take advantage of their divisions, and raise themselves on the ruins of both parties. Their pretence was, that the black Caribs gave shelter to the slaves who deserted from the French islands. Imposture is always productive of injustice. Those who were falsely accused, were afterwards attacked without reason. But the smallness of the numbers sent out against them; the jealousy of those who were appointed to command the expedition; the defection of the red Caribs, who refused to supply such dangerous allies with any of the succours they had promised them, to act against their rivals; the difficulty of procuring subsistence; the impossibility of coming up with enemies who kept themselves concealed in woods and mountains: all these circumstances conspired to disconcert this rash and violent enterprize. It was obliged to be given up, after the loss of many valuable lives; but the triumph the savages obtained, did not prevent them from suing for peace as suppliants. They even invited the French to come and live with them, swearing sincere friendship and inviolable concord. The proposal was agreed to; and the next year, 1719, many of the inhabitants of Martinico removed to St. Vincent.

THE first who came thither, settled peaceably, not only with the consent, but by the assistance of the red Caribs. This success induced others to follow their example; but these, whether from jealousy or some other motive, taught the savages a fatal secret. That people, who knew of no property but the fruits of the earth, because they are the reward of labour, learnt with astonishment, that they could sell the earth itself, which they had always looked upon as belonging to mankind in general. This knowledge induced them to measure, and fix boundaries; and from that instant peace and happiness were banished from their island. The partition of lands occasioned divisions amongst men. The following were the causes of the revolution produced by this system of property.

WHEN the French came to St. Vincent, they brought slaves along with them, to clear and till the ground. The black Caribs, shocked at the thoughts of resembling men who were degraded by slavery, and fearing that some time or other their colour, which betrayed their origin, might be made a pretence for enslaving them, took refuge in the thickest parts of the forest. In this situation, in order to imprint an indelible mark of distinction upon their tribe, that might be a perpetual token of their independence, they flattened the foreheads of all their children as soon as they were born. The men and women, whose heads could not bend to this strange shape, dared no longer appear in public without this visible sign of freedom.

freedom. The next generation appeared as a new race. The flat-headed Caribs, who were nearly of the same age, tall proper men, hardy and fierce, came and erected huts by the sea-side.

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THEY no sooner knew the price which the Europeans set upon the lands they inhabited, but they claimed a share with the other islanders. This rising spirit of covetousness was at first appeased by some presents of brandy, and a few sabres. But not content with these, they soon demanded fire-arms, as the red Caribs had; and at last they were desirous of having their share in all future sales of land, and likewise in the produce of past sales. Provoked at being denied a part in this brotherly repartition, they formed into a separate tribe, swore never more to associate with the red Caribs, chose a chief of their own, and declared war.

THE numbers of the combatants might be equal, but their strength was not so. The black Caribs had every advantage over the red, that industry, valour, and boldness, must soon acquire over a weak habit and a timorous disposition. But that spirit of equity, which is seldom deficient in savages, made the conqueror consent to share with the vanquished all the territory lying to the leeward. It was the only one which both parties were desirous of possessing, because there they were sure of receiving presents from the French.

THE black Caribs gained nothing by the agreement which they themselves had drawn up. The new planters who came to the island, always landed

and settled near the red Caribs, where the coast was most accessible. This preference roused that enmity which was but ill extinguished. The war broke out again. The red Caribs, who were always beaten, retired to windward of the island. Many took to their canoes, and went over to the continent, or to Tobago; and the few that remained, lived separate from the blacks.

THE black Caribs, conquerors and masters of all the leeward coast, required of the Europeans that they should again buy the lands they had already purchased. A Frenchman attempted to shew the deed of his purchase of some land which he had bought of a red Carib; *I know not*, says a black Carib, *what thy paper says; but read what is written on my arrow. There you may see, in characters which do not lye, that if you do not give me what I demand, I will go and burn your house to-night.* In this manner did a people who had not learnt to read, argue with those who derived such consequence from knowing how to write. They made use of the right of force, with as much assurance, and as little remorse, as if they had been acquainted with divine, political, and civil right.

TIME, which brings on a change of measures with a change of interests, put an end to these disturbances. The French became, in their turn, the strongest. They no longer spent their time in breeding poultry, and cultivating vegetables, cassava, maize, and tobacco, in order to sell them at Martinico. In less than twenty years, more important cultures employed 800 white men, and 3000

blacks. The annual sale of these new commodities amounted to 1,500,000 livres.* The island of St. Vincent was in this situation when it fell into the hands of the English. It was secured to them by the treaty of 1763.

THE French, who had begun to clear this country, which till then had always remained uncultivated, entertained not the least doubt as to their title to the lands. They held their property of the original inhabitants, who might, perhaps, have had the right to dispose of a territory which nature had given them. How great was their surprise, when they were informed that Great-Britain, which was in no treaty either with them or with the Caribs, thought herself authorized to strip them, unless they would redeem those very fields they had cultivated with their own hands, and founded her right on principles adopted in Europe! In vain did they remonstrate against an oppression so contrary to the order of nature, and even to the law of nations. Their complaints were disregarded. The chief men of the colony could not venture to suspend the orders sent from the mother-country, to sell the lands indiscriminately. The parliament proposed by this trifling profit, to supply the deficiencies which the expences of the war had made in the treasury. But this end was not answered. The 1,575,000 livres,† which arose from the concessions made in the three neutral islands, were almost wholly dissipated in vain formalities. If even the axiom of the Europeans, that

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false

* 65,625l.

† Near 69,000l.

false and barbarous axiom, that the lands inhabited by savages are to be considered as vacant, could have been rejected by the English, who, like the Spaniards, had so often availed themselves of it, to make usurpations; if the French had not had a right to purchase, what they had at least had a right to steal; if they had not by their labour acquired a lawful title to those lands which they had obtained by presents; in short, if the public treasury of England, exhausted by a war that was, perhaps, unjust, was to be replenished by the extortions of the peace, and the profits of these unlawful sales: still it was contrary to their own interest, and to their principles of political œconomy, thus to plunder industrious men, who would have accelerated the improvement of a colony which they themselves had founded.

BUT the severity of the new-established government made them disperse. Some went over to St. Martin, Marigalante, Guadalupe, and Martinico; but the greater part to St. Lucia, which began to be peopled by granting lands to those who would clear them. They all brought away their slaves. The emigration, however, was not universal. Some Frenchmen, less attached to their relations, and less fond of their own country, which had in a manner cast them off, chose to remain under the yoke of the conqueror on the fertile spot where fortune had thrown them. When the first emotions of discontent were passed, they considered they should gain more by redeeming their own
lands,

lands, than by settling upon fresh grounds that would cost them nothing.

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THEIR fortune, which had never yet been upon any solid foundation, must acquire firmness and vigour under the protection of English government. The island, which they share with their new fellow-citizens, though it does not promise much cotton, is very favourable to the culture of the arnotto and cocoa. Before the conquest, three millions weight of coffee were gathered there; the culture of which might with ease be considerably increased, if the attention of the English was not totally engaged in the plantation of sugar. That part of St. Vincent they were settled in, which is on the leeward side, supplied them only with a small quantity, because it is rugged and hilly. This circumstance made them desirous of occupying the plains on the windward side. The Caribs, who had taken refuge there, have refused to evacuate them, and the English have had recourse to arms to compel them to it. Though they defend themselves with great courage, they will, sooner or later, submit to the yoke of European tyranny. May the flames of war not extend themselves to Dominica!

THIS island is somewhat larger than St. Vincent. It is thirteen leagues in length, and nine, at most, in breadth; and in the center are inaccessible mountains, which pour down numerous rivers of excellent water upon fruitful but uneven grounds.

The English establish themselves at Dominica. Design of this settlement.

THIS country was inhabited by its own children. In 1732, 938 Caribs were found there, dispersed in 32 carbets; and 349 French people lived in a

district by the sea-side, which the savages had forsaken. These Europeans had no other assistance, or rather companions of their labours, but 23 free mulattoes, and 338 slaves. They were all employed in breeding poultry, in raising provisions for the consumption of Martinico, and cultivating 72,200 cotton shrubs. These trifling productions were afterwards enriched by the addition of coffee. At last, the island contained 600 white people, and 2000 blacks, at the peace of 1763, when it became an English colony.

BEFORE the end of the last century, Great-Britain, which was advancing towards the dominion of the seas, while she accused France of aspiring to the monarchy of the continent, had shewed as much eagerness for Dominica as she did in the late negotiations, when victory gave her a right to chuse. It was not for the sake of coffee, cocoa, or cotton, which, however, the English may multiply there beyond their hopes; nor for the sake of sugar, of which they must not expect more than three or four thousand hogsheds a year; and that only in process of time. An object of greater importance than settlements for cultivation, entered into their distant political views.

THE point that the English aimed at, was to draw all the commodities of the French colonies to Dominica, in order to trade with them themselves; and, indeed, till the nation, whose fortune has sunk with her glory, can recover her activity, and by the strength of her navy can be enabled in some measure to settle the price of her commodities, and prevent their being conveyed from their settlements

settlements by a contraband trade : till that auspicious time comes, the reciprocal interest of the French planters and the English merchants will baffle all the endeavours of the court of Versailles. The intercourse will be kept up by means of the former colonists remaining at Dominica, notwithstanding they have been treated by the new government with as much injustice as those of St. Vincent. This is not, however, the only severity they have experienced from the English ministry. While they made every harbour in the island a free port, they have laid a duty of thirty-three livres, fifteen sous,* upon every negro that should be imported ; and have even carried their imprudent avidity so far, as to require a part of this absurd tax to be paid before the sale : so that the traders which come from Guinea are obliged to bring money to Dominica, or to borrow it there upon extravagant terms ; which must either prevent them from trading there, or enhance the price of a merchandise, which is already degrading to mankind ; though it is still thought too high by avaritious men.

BUT the great advantage of this island for the English, is its being situated between Guadalupe and Martinico, at a small distance from each, so as to be equally alarming to both. Its safe and commodious roads will enable the English privateers and squadrons to intercept, without risque, the navigation of France in her colonies, and even the communication between the two islands. England

D d 4

seems

* 1l. 9s. 6d.



seems to have secured at the peace every defile and every post against the next war. Let us now resume the examination of her possessions. When we speak of a maritime and commercial power, an inquiry into the value of its colonies, is taking an estimate of its strength.

Present
state of the
British
islands.

THE number of slaves employed in the English islands, amounts to about 230,000; but their labour produces less than an equal number in the French colonies. This difference may be owing to three several causes. The soil of the British settlements, originally of an inferior quality, is now more exhausted by long culture. The care of the plantations is commonly committed to mercenaries, who are neither so diligent, so intelligent, nor so oeconomical as the proprietors. The methods of clearing and improving the lands have not yet attained to the same degree of perfection.

THE population of white people in the French colonies in proportion to the blacks, is as one to six; whereas in the English colonies it is seldom more than as one to eleven. The reason is, that the latter are confined to agriculture, and the former embrace both agriculture and trade. In this view, however, Barbadoes, that deals in slaves, and Jamaica, that has formed contraband connections with the Spanish coasts, should have, in proportion, a greater number of white people than the other settlements under the same dependence.

THIS disproportion between the black and white people has not always been the same in the English colonies. They formerly contained a great num-

ber of Europeans ; but these have disappeared, as the smaller cultures have decreased, and their place has been supplied by sugar plantations, which require a very considerable extent of territory. These inhabitants have successively taken refuge in new islands, have retired to North America, or have returned to the mother-country. Not but there were as many indigent and idle men in England, as at the time of the first emigrations from Europe to America ; but the spirit of adventure and enterprise, which was raised by the novelty of the object and other concurring circumstances, far from being encouraged, has been stifled by the planters. In vain have the laws required every proprietor to have a number of white men proportionable to the blacks upon his plantation ; these regulations have proved ineffectual. The planters chuse rather to run the trifling risque of paying a small penalty, than to act in conformity to a law, the observance of which would be more expensive to them than the penalty inflicted upon the breach of it. But the deficiency in the number of white men is compensated by the advantages they enjoy.

ALL the inhabitants of the English islands are formed into a regiment. This subjection, which neither exposes them to the caprices of a governor, nor to the insulting pride of regular troops, neither degrades nor offends any one. If this militia is inferior in point of discipline to the European soldiery, it far exceeds them in ardor and courage. If their numbers were sufficient to repulse an enemy whole government is almost a military one, they

they would save the mother-country the trouble of sending troops, at an immense expence and great risques, who, for the most part, perish without having done any service. But this militia of the colonies is hardly sufficient to keep the negroes in awe, who are much inclined to revolt against the English yoke; for slavery appears more intolerable in a free nation, where it is more unjust and more inconsistent with its character, than in others. Are then the efforts of men towards independence of such a nature, that when they have shaken off the yoke, they wish to impose it upon others? And do those who are the most impatient of slavery, thus become the most eager for power?

THOUGH Great-Britain has never laid any direct impost upon her colonies, they are more burdened with taxes than those which belong to less moderate governments. Left entirely to their own strength, they have been obliged to find resources in themselves against the calamities occasioned by the great commotions of nature, which are so frequent in those climates. Compelled to remedy the evils of war, and to provide for their defence, they have erected fortifications by voluntary contributions; these have been large, and ruinous, by the debts they have been obliged to contract. The civil administration, in manifest contradiction to the republican spirit, which is that of disinterestedness and œconomy, has always been very costly, and public business has never been transacted without great expence. This is an unavoidable evil that attends a trading people; whether free or not, they ultimately

mately love or value nothing but money. The thirst of gold being more the work of imagination than of necessity, it does not satisfy our desires like the gratification of our other passions. These are unconnected and transient; they are at variance with, or succeed each other; but the thirst of gold feeds and gratifies all the others; or at least it contributes to keep them up, and at the same time to satiate the desire of them, by procuring the means of indulgence. No habit grows stronger by continuance than that of amassing wealth; it seems to be equally excited by the enjoyments of vanity, and the self-denial of avarice. The rich man always wants to fill or enlarge his treasure. Constant experience verifies this, both in individuals and nations. Since great fortunes have been made in England by trade, the desire of riches is become the chief spring of action, and the universal passion. Such citizens as either could not or would not embrace that most lucrative of all employments, have not yet renounced that lucre which the manners and opinion of the times has made necessary. Even while aspiring to honours, they are in pursuit of riches. In their attachment to those laws and virtues, which ought ever mutually to assist each other, even in obtaining the honour of sitting in parliament, they have found the way to aggrandize their fortune. In order to carry their election into this powerful body, they have bribed the people; and afterwards have no more been ashamed to sell these very people to the court, than they were to have bought them. Every vote in parliament is
become

become venal. A famous minister kept a list, in which these votes were rated; and openly boasted of it, to the disgrace of the nation. It was the duty of his place, he said, to buy off the representatives of the nation, to make them vote, not against, but according to their conscience. But what can conscience plead against the allurements of gain? If the mercantile spirit has been capable of infecting the mother-country with the contagion of self-interest, is it possible that it should not prevail in the colonies, of which it is the principle and the support? Is it then true, that in proud Albion, a man who should be generous enough to serve his country for the mere love of glory, would be looked upon as a man of another world, and of the past age? If so, her enemies have only to shake off this mean spirit, and they will one day recover from her all they have lost.

YET, notwithstanding the enormous contributions and public expences in the English settlements, their lands still sell at a very high price. The Europeans and Americans vie with each other in buying them; and this competition enhances their value. They are allured by the certainty of finding a better market for their commodities in the mother-country, than other nations can have elsewhere. Besides, the English islands are less exposed to invasion and devastation, than those of other powers, that are rich in productions and poor in ships. The navigation of a people born for the sea, supports itself by its own strength, in war as well as in peace.

THE English take every method to increase the value of their islands. In 1766 they took off the duty of four and a half *per cent.* on all sugars exported; and likewise the duties on all other commodities. This exemption has been extended to the productions of other islands brought into their own. The government has done more. It has undertaken to defray the charges of the garrisons that are to protect the new conquests, which amount to 219,427 livres *. Thus the public treasury supports trade, in order to increase its prosperity.

THE connections of the English islands are greatly confined. No foreign ship is suffered to land, but at Jamaica and Dominica, which were made free ports in 1766. The severity of the laws prevents the governors from eluding this important prohibition. All intercourse with the several nations of Europe, has always been forbidden them; and in 1739, when they were permitted to carry their sugars directly to the foreign markets, it was under such restrictions as made it impracticable. It is the interest of the mother-country to reserve the whole produce of her islands for her own consumption, or her own trade. The following is the way in which they are distributed.

What are
the out-
ward con-
nections of
the British
islands?

THESE colonies have never produced provisions for their inhabitants, whether white or black. They afford neither wood, cattle, nor salt-fish. They are supplied with these necessaries from New-England; and send, in exchange, rum, pimento, ginger; few other commodities, but great quantities of molasses, which

* About 9,600l.

which is used there instead of sugar. The New-England people were never allowed to fetch sugar in kind from the islands, lest the cheapness of the commodity should induce them to neglect molasses, and to give other commodities in payment for those they received from the northern provinces. The mother-country was very sensible, that sugars sent from America to England, and from England to America, would find but few purchasers; but this consideration did not affect her. Her chief view was, not to sell a commodity to the northern colonies which she could readily dispose of in Europe; but particularly to secure the consumption of molasses, that she might appropriate to herself all the rich produce of her islands. But the measures that were taken to bring about this important end, were singularly thwarted.

FRANCE, which fortunately was possessed of the richest islands in the West-Indies, blinded by that imprudence which has always checked the progress of her fortune, never thought of sending her molasses and rum to her northern settlements. This bad policy drew the inhabitants of New-England to the French islands. They conveyed thither meal, vegetables, wood, salt-fish, cattle, and even money; and brought away indigo, cotton, and sugar, which they found means to send over to England; and, especially, all the molasses they wanted for their own consumption. It is demonstrable, that as early as the year 1719, they carried off 20,000 hogshheads; and that by the year 1733, this

this navigation employed 300 ships, and near 3000 sailors.

THIS intercourse, which made the colonies on the continent independent of the English islands for the articles they wanted, excited the murmurs of the planters in the islands. They applied to parliament for the prohibition of a trade, which, they alledged, was detrimental both to the mother-country and to their prosperity, and beneficial to the progress of the French settlements. The North-Americans, on their side, replied, that if this market were shut against them, they could neither advance in the clearing of lands, nor carry on their fur trade, nor go on with their fishery, nor consume national manufactures, nor add any thing to the wealth, power, or maritime strength of the mother-country.

THIS grand contest, which more or less concerned every Englishman, occasioned a great ferment, and produced many writings, in which party spirit betrayed much animosity. But it is by these means that the nation comes at the knowledge of its true interest. When it was fully instructed, the parliament, to reconcile the views of all the American colonists, confirmed the privilege those on the continent had to trade with the French; but, to favour the islands, they laid a duty on foreign molasses, so as to secure the preference to their own. This duty has often fluctuated. In 1764, the people of the islands petitioned that it might be put at 7 sols, 6 deniers * per gallon: those of the continent,

* About 3d.

continent wanted to pay but 3 sols, 9 deniers *. To satisfy both parties, it was rated 5 sols, 7 deniers and a half †. It has since been lowered to 1 sol, 10 deniers and a half ‡; which is levied equally upon foreign and national molasses. But, fortunately for the English islands, the demand for molasses and rum has of late years been so great in North-America, and the demand for rum in England, and especially in Ireland, has increased so much, that they have never been at a loss to dispose of these commodities. Such are the connections of the English islands with the northern colonies; they are much more considerable with the mother-country.

THE mother-country furnishes them with wearing apparel, utensils and slaves. This is about the twentieth part of what she draws from them. The reason of this disproportion is, that most of the great planters reside in England, and their agents abroad can and do consume but little. Their affairs are managed much in the same manner as those of the nobility in Europe.

A MERCHANT of credit is a kind of steward, who sends over whatever is wanted in the plantations that are under his management. He gives orders to the administrators, or stewards, who are to overlook and direct the cultures. He receives all the produce by the return of the ships. He pays the bills drawn upon him for the purchase of slaves. This commission brings him in the freight

* Not quite 2 d.

† Not quite 3 d.

‡ About 1 d.

freight, with the interest and reimbursement of the money he has advanced, besides the profit of commission upon the goods bought and sold. His profits are greater than those of the proprietor himself.

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IF this method differs from an exclusive privilege, it is at least attended with the same inconveniences ; since it throws the whole management of the plantations into the hands of a few privateers, and secures to them the carriage of all the commodities they produce. So that as there is no competition for the freight, it can always be kept up at the same price, which runs very high.

THE kind of monopoly which some merchants exercise in the British islands, is practised by the capital of the mother-country, with regard to the provinces. It is almost exclusively to London that all the produce of the colonies is sent. It is in London that most of the owners of this produce reside. It is in London that the profit arising from it is spent. The rest of the nation is but very indirectly concerned in it.

BUT London is the finest port in England. It is here that ships are built, and manufactures are carried on. London furnishes seamen for navigation, and hands for commerce. It stands in a temperate, fruitful, and central county. Every thing has a free passage in and out of it. It may be truly said to be the heart of the body politic from its local situation. It is not of an enormous size, though, like all other capitals, it is rather too large ; it is not a head of clay, that wants to domineer over a

colossus of gold. That city is not filled with proud and idle men, who only incumber and oppress a laborious people. It is the resort of all the merchants; the seat of the national assembly. There the king's palace is neither vast nor empty. He reigns in it by his enlivening presence. There the senate dictates the laws, agreeable to the sense of the people it represents. It neither fears the eye of the monarch, nor the frowns of the ministry. London has not arrived to its present greatness by the influence of government, which strains and over-rules all natural causes; but by the ordinary impulse of men and things, and by a kind of attraction of commerce. It is the sea, it is England, it is the whole world, that makes London rich and populous.

Summary
of the
riches that
Europe
draws from
the American
islands.

THE history of the colonies of the American Archipelago cannot be better concluded, than by a recapitulation of the riches with which Europe is supplied by them. This is the great object of commerce in our days; and hence the Leeward islands will ever hold a distinguished place in the annals of nations; since, in fact, riches are the spring of all the great revolutions that disturb the earth. The colonies of Asia Minor occasioned both the splendour and the downfall of Greece. Rome, which was at first desirous of subduing nations only to govern them, was stopped in the progress of her greatness, when she acquired the possession of the treasures of the east. War seemed to flumber for a while in Europe, in order to invade a new world; and has since been so often renewed there,

there, merely to divide the spoils. Poverty, which will always be the lot of the greater part of mankind, and the choice of a few wise men, makes no disturbance in the world. History, therefore, can only treat of massacres or riches.

BOOK
XIV.

THE riches of the Spanish islands cannot be ascertained with any degree of precision. The reason is this. Several kinds of commodities are usually brought thither from the continent, which are confounded with the productions of the Spanish leeward islands. Yet we may not, perhaps, be wide of the truth, if we compute the commodities which Spain annually draws from her islands at ten millions of livres *.

THE productions of the Danish colonies do not amount to more than seven millions †. They employ 70 ships, and 1500 sailors. These settlements receive, in slaves and merchandise, 1,500,000 livres ‡. The charges of exportation and importation may be valued at 900,000 livres §; and the duties and insurances at ten *per cent*. All expences deducted, the Danish islands must enjoy a clear income of about three millions and a half ||.

THE Dutch may receive from their settlements, commodities to the value of twenty-four millions of livres ¶. They are brought over to Holland by 150 ships, and 4000 sailors. The charges of this navigation must amount to three millions and a half of livres **; the duties, commission, and insurance,

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to

* 437,500l. † 306,250l. ‡ 65,625l. § 39,375l.
|| 153,125l. ¶ 1,050,000l. ** 153,125l.

to two millions and a half;* and the goods and slaves sent over, to six millions.† There remains clear for the proprietors about twelve millions.‡

THE produce of the British islands, which employs 600 ships, and 12,000 sailors, may be estimated at sixty six millions of livres.§ Independent of what the mother-country sends to Jamaica for her contraband trade with the continent, she furnishes to the value of seventeen millions|| in slaves and merchandise, for the use of her colonies. The profits of the agents for this trade; the charges of navigation, duties and commission put together, cannot fall far short of sixteen millions.¶ From this calculation, the clear income of the owners of the plantations will appear to be thirty-three millions.**

WE shall not be apprehensive of being accused of over-rating the produce of the French islands, when we reckon it at one hundred million of livres.†† Six hundred ships, and 18,000 sailors are employed in the transport. France sells to these great settlements, in slaves, in the growth of her own soil, or the fruits of her own industry, and in Portugal gold, to the value of sixty millions.‡‡ The profit of her merchants, only at ten *per cent.* must be six millions.§§ The charges of navigation at least fifteen;||| and the duties, insurance and commission, cannot be less than seven.▮ There only

* 109,375l. † 262,500l. ‡ 525,000l. § 2,887,500l.
|| 743,750l. ¶ 700,000l. ** 1,443,750l. †† 4,375,000l.
‡‡ 2,625,000l. §§ 262,500l. ||| 656,250l.
▮ 306,250l.

only remains clear for the proprietors about twelve millions * The contrast in specie between this trifling balance, and that of the other islands, must appear striking, if we did not observe that in the other colonies, four out of five of the planters do not reside ; whereas, in the French colonies, nine out of ten of the proprietors live constantly upon the spot.

THE result of this estimate is, that the productions of the great Archipelago of America, when brought into Europe, are worth two hundred and seven millions of livres.† It is not a gift that the new world makes to the old. The nations which receive this important fruit of the labour of their subjects settled in another hemisphere, give in exchange, though with evident advantage to themselves, the choicest produce of their soil and of their manufactures. Some consume the whole of what they draw from their islands ; others, and especially France, make the overplus the basis of a prosperous trade with their neighbours. Thus every nation that is possessed of property in America, if it is truly industrious, gains still less by the number of subjects it maintains abroad without any expence, than by the population which those procure it at home. To subsist a colony in America, it is necessary to cultivate a province in Europe ; and this additional culture increases the inward strength and real wealth of the nation. In a word, at this present time, the trade of the whole world is connected with that of the colonies.

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* 525,000l.

† 9,056,250l.

THE labours of the people settled in those islands, are the sole basis of the African trade : they extend the fisheries and the cultures of North America, afford a good market for the manufactures of Asia, and double, perhaps treble, the activity of all Europe. They may be considered as the principal cause of the rapid motion which now agitates our globe. This ferment must increase, as the culture of the islands draws nearer to perfection, and it has not yet attained to half the prosperity it is capable of.

NOTHING would be more likely to hasten this happy period, than to give up the exclusive trade, which every nation has reserved to itself in its own colonies. An unlimited freedom to trade with all the islands, would be productive of the greatest efforts, by exciting a general competition. Men who are inspired with the love of humanity, and are enlightened by that sacred fire, have ever wished to see every obstacle removed that intercepts a direct communication of all the ports of America, with all those of Europe. The several governments, which being almost all corrupt in their origin, cannot be influenced by this principle of universal benevolence, have imagined that societies mostly founded on the separate interest of each nation, or of one single individual, ought to be formed in order to confine all the connections of every colony to its respective mother-country. The opinion is, that these restraining laws secure to each commercial nation in Europe the sale of its own territorial productions, the means of procuring such foreign commodities

as it may stand in need of, and an advantageous balance with all the other trading nations.

B O O K
XIV.
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THIS system, which was long thought to be the best, has been vigorously opposed, when the theory of commerce had once shaken off the fetters of prejudice. It has been alledged, that no nation can supply all the real or imaginary wants of its colonies out of its own property. There is not one that is not obliged to get some articles from abroad, in order to complete the cargoes for America. From this necessity arises at least an indirect communication of all nations with those distant possessions. Would it not be more eligible to convey each article to its destination in a direct line, than by this indirect way of exchange? This plan would be attended with less expence; would promote both culture and consumption, and bring an increase of revenue to the public treasury: an infinite number of advantages would accrue to the mother countries, which would make them full amends for the exclusive right they all claim, to their reciprocal injury.

THESE maxims are true, solid, and useful, but they will not be adopted. The reason is this. A great revolution is preparing in the trade of Europe, and is already too far advanced not to be completed. Every government is endeavouring to do without the assistance of foreign industry. Most of them have succeeded, and the rest will not be long before they free themselves from this dependence. Already the English and the French, who are the great manufacturers of Europe, see their master-pieces of

workmanship refused on all sides. Will these two nations, which are at the same time the greatest planters in the islands, open their ports to those who force them, as it were, to shut up their manufactures at home? The more they lose in the foreign markets, the less they will consent to a competition in the only market they have left. They will rather strive to extend it, that they may have a greater demand for their commodities, and a greater supply of American productions. It is by these returns that they will preserve their advantage in the balance of trade, without being apprehensive that the plenty of these productions will lower their value. The progress of industry in our continent must increase population and wealth, and of course the consumption and value of the productions of the Antilles.

What will
be the fate
of the
American
islands
hereafter?

BUT what will become of this part of the new world? Will the settlements, that render it so flourishing, always remain in the hands of their original possessors; or will the masters of them be changed? If a revolution should take place in them, by what means will it be brought about, and what people will reap the advantage of it? These are questions that afford much room for conjecture, which may be assisted by the following reflections.

THE islands depend totally upon Europe for a supply of all their wants. Those which only respect wearing apparel and implements of husbandry will admit of delay; but the least disappointment, with regard to provisions, spreads a general alarm, and causes universal desolation, which rather tempts
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the people to wish for than fear the approach of an enemy. And, indeed, it is a common saying in the colonies, that they will never fail to capitulate with a squadron stored with barrels of flour instead of gunpowder. If we pretend to obviate this inconvenience, by obliging the inhabitants to cultivate for their own subsistence, we defeat the very end of these settlements, without any real advantage. The mother-country would deprive herself of a great part of the rich produce of her colonies, and would not preserve them from invasion.

IN vain should we hope to repulse an invasion by the help of negroes, born in a climate where effeminacy stifles the seeds of courage, and who are still more enervated by slavery, and consequently but little concerned in the choice of their tyrants. As to the white men, dispersed in extensive plantations, they are so few, that they could make but little resistance. It is even a question whether they would oppose an invasion if they could.

ALL the colonists hold it as a maxim, that their islands are to be considered as those great cities in Europe, which, lying open to the first comer, change their dominion without an attack, without a siege, and almost without being sensible of the war. The strongest is their master, The inhabitants cry out with the Italians, *God save the conqueror*; passing and repassing from one yoke to another in the course of a campaign. Whether at the peace, the city returns under its former government, or remains in the hands of the victor, it has lost nothing of its splendour; while towns, that
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are defended by ramparts and difficult to be taken, are always depopulated and reduced to a heap of ruins. Perhaps there is scarce one inhabitant in the American islands who does not consider it to be a fatal prejudice to expose his fortune for the sake of his country. Of what importance is it to this rapacious calculator whose laws he obeys, if his crops are left standing? Is it to enrich himself that he has crossed the seas. If he preserves his treasures, his purpose is answered. Can the mother-country that forsakes him, and frequently after having tyrannized over him; that is ready to give him up, or, perhaps, to sell him at the conclusion of a peace; have any claim to the sacrifice of his life? It is no doubt a glorious thing to die for one's country. But a state, where the prosperity of the nation is sacrificed to forms of government; where the art of imposing upon men is the art of training up subjects; where slaves are wanted instead of citizens; where war is declared, and peace concluded, without consulting the opinion or the wishes of the people; where evil designs are always countenanced by the intrigues of debauchery, or the practices of monopoly; and where useful plans are only adopted with such impediments as prevent their being carried into execution: is this the country for which our blood should be sacrificed?

THE fortifications, erected for the defence of the colonies, will secure them no better than the efforts of the inhabitants. Even if they were stronger, and better guarded and stored than they have ever been, they must always surrender unless they are succoured. Should the resistance hold out above

six months, that circumstance would not discourage the besiegers, who, being within reach of a constant supply of refreshments both by land and by sea, could better endure the severity of the climate, than a garrison could resist the duration of a siege.

THERE is no other way to preserve the colonies but by a formidable navy. It is on the docks and in the harbours of Europe that the bastions and ramparts of the American colonies must be raised. While the mother-country shelters them, as it were, under the wings of her ships; so long as she shall fill up with her fleets the vast interval that separates her from these islands, the offspring of her industry and power; her parental attention to their prosperity will secure their attachment to her. In future, therefore, the maritime forces will be the great object that will attract the attention of all proprietors of land in America. European policy generally secures the frontiers of states by fortified towns; but for maritime powers, there ought, perhaps, to be citadels in the center, and ships on the circumference. A commercial island, indeed, wants no fortified towns. Her rampart is the sea, which constitutes her safety, her subsistence, her wealth; the winds are at her command, and all the elements conspire to promote her glory.

IN this respect, England may undertake any enterprise, and expect every kind of success. She is now the only power that can confide in her possessions in America, and that is able to attack the colonies of her rivals. Perhaps, it will not be long ere she follows the dictates of her courage. The pride
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of past success; the very restlessness inseparable from prosperity; the burden of conquests, which seem to be the punishment of victory: all these are so many incentives to the renewal of war. The people of England are crushed under the weight of their undertakings and their national debt; their manufactures are threatened with total ruin; they are continually losing some branch of trade; they cannot appease the ferment of the northern colonies, but by opening new marts for their productions. The notions they have conceived of their own valour, and the terror which their arms have inspired, would be diminished by a long peace; their fleets would consume in idleness; their admirals would lose the advantages of experience. All these reflections are warrantable motives for hostilities, to a nation that has waged war before it was declared; and pretends to the dominion of all America, by the same right that places a despotic prince at the head of a nation. The first spark will kindle in America, and the storm will directly fall upon the French islands; because the rest, except the Havannah, will voluntarily submit to the yoke.

THE French should, therefore, first prepare for the defence of America. If it can be defended, they alone can effect it, for the Dutch are no longer of any consequence; and Spain has suffered all her natural powers to remain inactive, and has put the means of her strength into the hands of other nations. At this time, therefore, France alone is able to raise a formidable navy. Philosophers of all nations, friends of mankind, forgive a French writer

writer if at this period he urges his countrymen to build ships. His only view is to promote the tranquillity of the earth, by wishing to see that equilibrium established in the dominion of the seas, which now preserves the security of the continent.

FRANCE, almost in the center of Europe, and placed between the Ocean and Mediterranean, unites, by her position and the extent of her territory, the strength of land forces to the advantages of a maritime power. She can convey all her productions from one sea to the other, without passing under the threatening cannon of Gibraltar, or the insulting flag of the states of Barbary. A channel, preferable to the Pactolus, pours the rich produce of her most beautiful provinces into both seas, and the treasures of both seas into her choicest provinces. No navigating nation has the advantage of so speedy and easy a communication between her several ports by land, or between her several lands by her ports. She is within reach of Spain and Portugal, which know not how to provide for their own sustenance; and sufficiently near to the Turks and Africans, whose trade is merely passive. The mildness of her climate procures her the inestimable advantage, almost peculiar to herself, of sending out and receiving her ships at all seasons of the year. Her roads are so deep, that she can give her ships the properest form, both for swiftness and safety.

SHE is in no want of articles and commodities for exportation. America and the north of Europe contend for, or divide, her wines and brandies

between them. How many nations are there that have demands for her salt, her oil, her soap, her fruits, and even her corn ! The productions of her colonies are eagerly and universally sought after. But it is more particularly by her manufactures, her silks, and her fashions, that she regulates the taste of all nations. Notwithstanding all the endeavours used to oppose this prevailing passion, Europe is fascinated, and will never change. This phrenzy has found its way even to England, where the legislators themselves, while they enact laws to prevent it, are the first to break them. In vain, to avoid the heavy duties imposed on foreign manufactures, have others tried to imitate them. The fruitfulness of invention will ever prevent the readiest imitation ; for the light fancy of a nation, whose works have all the advantage of a youthful appearance of novelty, which consequently makes the manufactures of her neighbours always old-fashioned, will constantly deceive the jealousy and avidity of those who attempt to over-reach her by this method. What should we not expect from the navigation of a people, who are thus able to supply other nations with whatever can feed their vanity, their luxury, and their voluptuousness ?

No obstacle arising from the nature of things could put a stop to this activity. France, extensive enough not to be obstructed by the surrounding powers, and so happily limited as not to sink under the weight of her own greatness ; France has in her own hands all the means of attaining to

that power by sea, which would complete her prosperity. A numerous population, fit for any enterprise, only wants encouragement to be directed to the sea-service. Even the reproach that is made to the French for having more sailors on board their ships than other nations, is itself a proof that men are not wanting for the art, but rather that the art is not sufficiently attended to. Yet no nation has been endowed by nature with more of that lively genius which is fit for the improvement of ship-building, or of that bodily dexterity which can save time and expence in the manœuvre, by the simplicity and celerity of the means made use of.

It is in the mercantile service of the navy, that a nation learns to be formidable at sea. All sailors are naturally soldiers. They daily face the dangers of death ; they are inured to the fatigues of labour, and the injurious effects of climates. A military marine can only be trained up by service at sea. The mercantile navy is the school, and commerce the nursery and support of it. In vain would the royal treasury of a court that has never seen the sea or a ship, fit out fleets ; the ocean scorns those effeminate and cringing beings who stoop and bend before other men. Such commanders would require no other assistance from the winds than to help them in their flight. Let them remain in the capital, and leave the command of men of war to the masters of privateers ; or, rather, let the nobility, if ever they mean to be commanders at sea, become merchants, and go themselves on board their own trading

trading ships, before they make interest for posts in the royal navy.

MODERN states have no other way to aggrandize themselves but by maritime power. Since a kind of luxury unknown to the ancients, has infected Europe with a multitude of new tastes, those nations which can furnish the rest with the means of gratifying them, must become the most considerable; because, by exerting their powers in the perils of navigation and the labours of trade, they keep their neighbours in inaction and sensuality; they keep in a state of dependence on their industry, those people whom they pay for carrying on war with the very money they have drained them of by luxury. It is since this revolution, which hath, as it were, submitted the earth to the sea, that the most important political events have been determined on the ocean. Richelieu had not perceived this to be near at hand, when, to keep out the English from Rochelle, he almost cut off all communication between the town and the sea. Ships would have been better than a dike; but the navy had no share in his system of enslaving France, in order to rule over Europe. The monarch, to whose greatness he had been paving the way, imagined, as he did, that that greatness consisted only in the art of conquering. After having excited the whole continent of Europe, by his enterprises, to take up arms, he was obliged to keep numberless troops in pay to withstand that league. His kingdom soon became, as it were, one great camp; and his frontiers a mere hedge of fortified towns. Under that
brilliant

brilliant reign the springs of the state were constantly overstretched; the government, by its own vigour, escaped from one danger only to fall into another. The want of a standing navy was never felt till the finances were almost too much exhausted to raise it.

EVER since the end of that century, in which the people, supported, at least, under their misfortunes by the remembrance of past successes, still dazzled Europe with the prospect of forty years of glory, were attached to the government that had raised them to such a pitch of honour, and bad defiance to the rivals they had humbled; ever since that period, the prosperity of France has always been upon the decline, notwithstanding the acquisitions that have enlarged her territories. She would not have been enervated by twenty years peace, had she employed those powers in the improvement of her navy, which had been too long wasted in a continental war. But her marine has never been put upon a respectable footing. The avarice of one ministry; the prodigality of another; the indolence of many; little selfish views; court intrigues that guide the government; a series of vices and errors; a multitude of obscure and despicable causes, have prevented the nation from becoming as great at sea as she had been on the continent, and, at least, from maintaining the balance of power, if not contending for the superiority. The evil is incurable, if the misfortunes she has sustained in the late war, and the humiliating terms she has submitted to at the peace, have not inspired

her rulers with the spirit of wisdom, and attracted all their projects and all their efforts towards establishing a formidable navy.

EUROPE waits impatiently for this revolution. She will never think her liberties secure, till she sees a flag upon the ocean that does not tremble before the British standard. That of France is now the only one which may in time aspire to this competition. The wishes of all nations are now united for the prosperity of that power which shall be able to defend them from one that can alone pretend to the universal empire of the seas. The system of equilibrium requires that France should augment her naval powers, more especially as she cannot effect this without diminishing her land forces. Then her influence, divided between both elements, will be formidable to none but such as would disturb its harmony. The nation itself requires nothing more to aspire to this state of greatness, than to be at liberty to advance towards it. The government must allow the people to exert themselves. But, if authority contract the powers and freedom of industry, by obstructing it more and more with taxes and restraints; if it diminish its vigour by endeavouring to force it; if, in attracting all to itself, it fall into a state of dependence on those who are subject to it; if, in order to go to America or India, it be necessary to pass through the intricate windings of the capital or the court; if some minister, already great and powerful, will not immortalize his name, by delivering the colonies from the yoke of a military government, by
alleviating

alleviating the oppression of the customs upon commerce, by opening the road to preferment for those who are brought up in the merchant service, as well as for those who are in the service of the royal navy: in short, if there is not a total change, inevitable ruin must ensue.

FRANCE has committed great mistakes, and made many cruel sacrifices. It is doubtful whether the riches she has preserved in the islands of America are an equivalent to the strength she has lost on the continent of that vast country. It is in the north that a fresh revolution is preparing in the new world. That is to be the seat of our wars. There let us explore the secret of our future destiny.

END OF THE FOURTEENTH BOOK.

B O O K XV.

B O O K
XV.

Reasons
why the
French
were so late
in esta-
blishing
settlements
in Ame-
rica.

SPAIN was mistress of the rich empires of Mexico and Peru, the gold of the new world, and of almost all South America. The Portuguese, after a long series of victories, defeats, enterprises, mistakes, conquests, and losses, had kept the most valuable settlements in Africa, in India, and in the Brazils. The French government had not even conceived it possible to establish colonies, or imagined that any advantage could be derived from having possessions in those distant regions.

THEIR ambitious views were turned entirely towards Italy. Some antient claims on the Milanese and the two Sicilies had involved them in expensive wars, in which they had been engaged for a long time. Their internal commotions diverted them still more from the great object of establishing a distant and extensive commerce, and from the
idea

idea of increasing their dominions by acquisitions in the East and West-Indies.

THE authority of kings, though not openly contested, was opposed and eluded. Some remains of the feudal government were still subsisting; and many of its abuses had not yet been abolished. The prince was continually employed in restraining the restless spirit of a powerful nobility. Most of the provinces that composed the monarchy were governed by distinct laws and forms of their own. Every society, every order in the state, enjoyed peculiar privileges, which were either perpetually contested or carried to excess. The government was a complicated machine, which could only be regulated by the management of a variety of delicate springs. The court was frequently under a necessity of having recourse to the shameful resources of intrigue and corruption, or to the odious means of oppression and tyranny; and the nation was continually negotiating with the prince. Regal authority was unlimited, without having received the sanction of the laws; and the people, though frequently too independent, had yet no security for their liberty. Hence arose continual jealousies, apprehensions, and struggles. The whole attention of the government was not directed to the welfare of the nation, but to the means of enslaving it. The people were sensible of their wants, but ignorant of their powers and resources. They found their rights alternately invaded or trampled upon by their nobles or their sovereigns.

FRANCE, therefore, suffered the Spaniards and Portuguese to discover new worlds, and to give laws to unknown nations. Their attention was at length excited by admiral Coligny, a man of the most extensive, steady and active genius, that ever flourished in that powerful empire. This great politician, attentive to the interests of his country, even amidst the horrors of a civil war, sent John Ribaud to Florida, in 1562. This vast tract of North America then extended from Mexico to the country which the English have since cultivated under the name of Carolina. The Spaniards had passed it in 1512, but had made no settlements there. The motives that engaged them to make this discovery, and those which induced them to relinquish it, are equally unaccountable.

ALL the Indians of the Caribbee islands believed, upon the credit of an old tradition, that nature had concealed a spring or fountain somewhere on the continent, whose waters had the property of restoring youth to all old men who were so fortunate as to taste of them. This idea delighted the romantic imagination of the Spaniards. The loss of many, who were the victims of their credulity, did not discourage the rest. Far from suspecting that the first had perished in an attempt, of which death would prove the most certain consequence, they concluded that they did not return, because they had found the art of enjoying perpetual youth, and had discovered a spot so delightful, that they did not chuse to leave it.

PONCE de LEON was the most famous of the navigators who were infatuated with this chimerical idea. Fully persuaded of the existence of a third world, the conquest of which was reserved to advance his fame ; but, thinking that the remainder of his life was too short for the immense career that was opening before him, he resolved to endeavour to renew it, and recover that youthful vigour so necessary to his designs. He immediately bent his course towards those climates where fable had placed the Fountain of youth, and discovered Florida ; from whence he returned to Porto-Rico, visibly more advanced in years than when he set out. Thus chance immortalized the name of an adventurer, who made a real discovery, merely by being in pursuit of an imaginary one.

THERE is scarce any useful and important discovery made by the human mind, that has not been rather the effect of a restless imagination, than of industry excited by reflection. Chance, which is the imperceptible course of nature, is never at rest, and assists all men without distinction. Genius grows weary and is soon discouraged ; it falls to the lot only of a few, and exerts itself merely at intervals. Its utmost efforts frequently serve only to throw it in the way of chance, and invite its assistance. The only difference between a man of genius and one of common capacity is, that the former anticipates and explores what the latter accidentally hits upon. But even the man of genius himself more frequently employs the advantages which chance presents to him. It is the lapidary

who gives the value to the diamond, which the peasant has dug up without knowing its worth.

THE Spaniards had neglected Florida, because they did not discover there either the fountain that was to make them all grow young, or gold which hastens the period of old age. The French found there a more real and valuable treasure; a clear sky, a fruitful soil, a temperate climate, and savages who were lovers of peace and hospitality; but they themselves were not sensible of the worth of these advantages. Had they followed the directions of Coligny; had they tilled the ground, which only wanted the assistance of man to call forth its treasures; had a due subordination been maintained among the Europeans; had not the rights of the natives of the country been violated; a colony might have been founded, which in time would have become flourishing and permanent. But such prudent measures were not to be expected from the levity of the French. The provisions were lavished; the fields were not sown; the authority of the chiefs was disregarded by untractable subalterns; the passion for hunting and war engrossed all their attention; in short, every duty was neglected. To complete their misfortune, the civil disturbances in France diverted the subjects from an undertaking which had never engaged the attention of government. Theological disputes alienated the minds and divided the hearts of all ranks of people. Government had violated that sacred law of nature, which enjoins all men to tolerate the opinions of their fellow-creatures; and the rules of policy which

which are inconsistent with an unseasonable exertion of tyranny. The reformed religion had made great progress in France, when it was persecuted. A considerable part of the nation was involved in the proscription, and took up arms.

SPAIN, though not less intolerant, had prevented religious disturbances, by suffering the clergy to assume that authority which has been continually increasing, but which, for the future, will be constantly on the decline. The inquisition, always ready to oppose the least appearance of innovation, found means to prevent the protestant faith from making its way into the kingdom, and by this means spared itself the trouble of extirpating it. Philip II. wholly taken up with America, and accustomed to consider himself as the sole proprietor of it, being informed of the attempts made by some Frenchmen to settle there, and of their being neglected by their own government, fitted out a fleet from Cadiz to destroy them. Menendez, who was the commander of it, landed in Florida ; where he found the enemies he went in search of settled at Carolina fort. He attacked all their intrenchments, carried them sword in hand, and made a dreadful massacre. Those who escaped it were hanged on a tree, with this inscription : *Not as Frenchmen, but as heretics.*

FAR from seeking to revenge this insult, the ministry of Charles IX. secretly rejoiced at the miscarriage of a project, which, though they had approved it, was not countenanced by them ; because it had been contrived by the head of the Huguenots, and might reflect honour on their party. The indignation

nation of the public only confirmed them in their resolution of shewing no resentment. It was reserved for a private man to execute what the state ought to have done.

DOMINIC de Gourgues, born at mount Marfan in Gascony, a skilful and intrepid seaman, an enemy to the Spaniards, from whom he had received personal injuries; passionately fond of his country, of hazardous expeditions, and of glory; sold his estate, built some ships, and with a select band of his own stamp embarked to attack the murderers in Florida. He drove them from all their posts with incredible valour and activity, defeated them in every rencounter, and, by way of retaliation for the contemptuous insult they had shewn, hung them up on trees; with this inscription: *Not as Spaniards, but as assassins.*

HAD the Spaniards been content with massacring the French, the latter would never have had recourse to such cruel reprisals; but they were offended at the inscription, and were guilty of an atrocious act, in revenge for the derision to which they had been exposed. This is not the only instance in history which may lead one to imagine, that it is not the thing that has made the word, but the word that has made the thing.

THE expedition of the brave de Gourgues was attended with no further consequences. He blew up the forts he had taken, and returned home, either for want of provisions sufficient to enable him to remain in Florida, or because he foresaw that no succours were to be expected from France, or
thought

thought that friendship with the natives would last no longer than the means of purchasing it, or that he would be attacked by the Spaniards. He was received by all true patriots with the applause due to his merit; but neglected by the court, which was too despotic and superstitious not to stand in awe of virtue.

B O O K
XV.

FROM the year 1597, when this intrepid Gafcon evacuated Florida, the French neglected America. Bewildered in a chaos of unintelligible doctrines, they lost their reason and their humanity. The mildest and most sociable people upon earth became the most barbarous and sanguinary. Scaffolds and stakes were insufficient: as they all appeared criminal in each other's eyes, they were all mutually victims and executioners. After having condemned one another to eternal destruction, they assassinated each other at the instigation of their priests, who breathed nothing but the spirit of revenge and bloodshed. At length, the generous Henry softened the minds of his subjects; his compassion and tenderness made them feel their own calamities; he revived their fondness for the sweets of social life; he prevailed upon them to lay down their arms; and they consented to live happy under his parental laws.

IN this state of tranquillity and freedom, under a king who possessed the confidence of his people, they began to turn their thoughts to some useful projects, and undertook the establishment of colonies abroad. Florida was the first country that naturally occurred to them. Except Fort St. Augustine,

gustine, formerly built by the Spaniards, at the distance of ten or twelve leagues from the French colony, the Europeans had not a single settlement in all that vast and beautiful country. The inhabitants were not a formidable set of men; and the soil had every promising appearance of fertility. It was likewise reported to be rich in gold and silver mines, both those metals having been found there; whereas in fact they came from some ships that had been cast away upon the coasts. The remembrance of the great actions performed by some Frenchmen could not yet be erased. Probably the French themselves were rather afraid of irritating Spain; which was not yet disposed to suffer the least settlement to be made on the Gulph of Mexico, or even near it. The danger of provoking a nation, so formidable in those parts, determined them to keep at a distance as much as possible, and therefore they gave the preference to the more northern parts of America; that road was already chalked out.

The
French
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views to-
wards Ca-
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FRANCIS I. had sent out Verazani, a Florentine, in 1523, who only took a view of the island of Newfoundland, and some coasts of the continent; but made no stay there.

ELEVEN years after, James Cartier, a skilful navigator of St. Malo, resumed the projects of Verazani. The two nations, which had first landed in America, exclaimed against the injustice of treading in their footsteps. *What!* said Francis I. pleasantly, *shall the kings of Spain and Portugal quietly divide all America between them, without suffering me to take a share as their brother? I would*
fain

fain see the article of Adam's will that bequeaths that vast inheritance to them. Cartier proceeded further than his predecessor. He went up the river St. Lawrence ; but, after having bartered some European commodities with the savages for some of their furs, he re-embarked for France ; where an undertaking, which seemed to have been entered upon merely from imitation, was neglected from levity.

BOOK
XV.

IT happened fortunately that the Normans, the Britons, and the Biscayans, continued to carry on the cod-fishery on the great sand-bank, along the coasts of Newfoundland, and in all the adjacent latitudes. These intrepid and experienced men served as pilots to the adventurers who, since the year 1598, have attempted to settle colonies in those desert regions. None of those first settlements prospered, because they were all under the direction of exclusive companies, which had neither abilities to chuse the best situations, nor a sufficient stock to wait for their returns. One monopoly followed another in a rapid succession without any advantage ; they were pursued with greediness, without a plan, or any means to carry them into execution. All these different companies successively ruined themselves ; and the state was no gainer by their loss. These numerous expeditions had cost France more men, more money, and more ships, than other states would have expended in the foundation of great empires. At last Samuel de Champlain went a considerable way up the river St. Lawrence ; and in 1608, upon the borders of
that

that river laid the foundation of Quebec, which became the origin, center, and capital, of New France or Canada.

THE unbounded track, that opened itself to the view of this colony, discovered only dark, thick and deep forests, whose height alone was a proof of their antiquity. Numberless large rivers came down from a considerable distance to water these immense regions. The intervals between them were full of lakes. Four of these measured from two to five hundred leagues in circumference. These sort of inland seas communicated with each other; and their waters, after forming the great river St. Lawrence, considerably increased the bed of the ocean. Every thing in this rude part of the new world appeared grand and sublime. Nature here displayed such luxuriancy and majesty as commanded veneration; and a thousand wild graces, far superior to the artificial beauties of our climates. Here the imagination of a painter or a poet would have been raised, animated, and filled with those ideas which leave a lasting impression on the mind. All these countries exhaled an air fit to prolong life. This temperature, which from the position of the climate must have been extremely pleasant, lost nothing of its wholesomeness by the severity of a long and intense winter. Those who impute this merely to the woods, springs, and mountains, with which this country abounds, have not taken every thing into consideration. Others add to these causes of the cold, the elevation of the land, a pure aerial atmosphere, seldom loaded with

with vapours ; and the direction of the winds, which blow from north to south over seas always frozen.

NOTWITHSTANDING this the inhabitants of this sharp and bleak climate were but thinly clad. Before their intercourse with us, a cloak of buffalo or beaver skin, bound with a leathern girdle, and stockings made of a roe-buck skin, was the whole of their dress. The additions they have since made give great offence to their old men, who are ever lamenting the degeneracy of their manners.

Govern-
ment, cus-
toms, vir-
tues, vices,
and wars,
of the sa-
vages that
inhabited
Canada.

FEW of these savages knew any thing of husbandry ; they only cultivated maize, and that they left entirely to the management of the women, as being beneath the dignity of independent men. It was their bitterest imprecation against an enemy, that he might be reduced to till the ground. Sometimes they would condescend to go a fishing ; but their chief delight, and the employment of their whole life, was hunting. For this purpose the whole nation went out as they did to war ; every family marched in search of sustenance. They prepared for the expedition by severe fasting, and never stirred out till they had implored the assistance of their gods ; they did not pray for strength to kill the beasts, but that they might be so fortunate as to meet with them. None staid behind except infirm and old men ; all the rest sallied forth, the men to kill the game, and the women to dry and bring it home. The winter was with them the finest season of the year : the bear, the roe-buck, the stag, and the elk, could not then run
with

with any degree of swiftness through snow that was four or five feet deep. The savages, who were stopt neither by the bushes, the torrents, the ponds, nor the rivers, and who could out-run most of the swifter animals, were seldom unsuccessful in the chase. When they were without game, they lived upon acorns ; and, for want of these, fed upon the sap or inner skin that grows between the wood and the bark of the aspen-tree and the birch.

IN the interval between their hunting parties, they made or mended their bows and arrows, the rackets for running upon the snow, and the canoes for crossing the lakes and rivers. These travelling implements, and a few earthen pots, were the only specimens of art among these wandering nations. Those, who were collected in towns, added to these the labours requisite for their sedentary way of life, for the fencing of their huts, and securing them from being attacked. The savages at that period gave themselves up to total inaction, in the most profound security. The people, content with their lot, and satisfied with what nature afforded them, were unacquainted with that restlessness which arises from a sense of our own weakness, that loathing of ourselves and every thing about us, that necessity of flying from solitude, and easing ourselves of the burthen of life by throwing it upon others.

THEIR stature in general was beautifully proportioned, but they had more agility than strength, and were more fit to bear the fatigues of the chase than hard labour. Their features were
regular

regular, and there was a kind of fierceness in their aspect which they contracted in war and hunting. Their complexion was of a copper-colour; and they derived it from nature, by which all men who are constantly exposed to the open air are tanned. This complexion was rendered still more disagreeable by the absurd custom that prevails among savages, of painting their bodies and faces, either to distinguish each other at a distance, to render themselves more agreeable to their mistresses, or more formidable in war. Besides this varnish, they rubbed themselves with the fat of quadrupeds, or the oil of fish, a custom common and necessary among them, in order to prevent the intolerable stings of gnats and insects, that swarm in uncultivated countries. These ointments were prepared and mixed up with certain red juices, supposed to be a deadly poison to the moschettoes. To these several methods of anointing themselves, which penetrate and discolour the skin, may be added the fumigations they made in their huts against those insects, and the smoke of the fires they kept all the winter to warm themselves, and to dry their meat. This was sufficient to make them appear frightful to our people, though beautiful without doubt, or at least not disagreeable to themselves. Their sight, smell, and hearing, and all their senses, were remarkably quick, and gave them early notice of their dangers and wants. These were few, but their sicknesses were still fewer. They hardly knew of any but what were occasioned by too

violent exercise, or eating too much after long abstinence.

They were not a very numerous people ; and possibly this might be an advantage to them. Polished nations must wish for an increase of population ; because, as they are governed by ambitious rulers, who are the more inclined to war from not being personally engaged in it, they are under a necessity of fighting, either to invade or repulse their neighbours ; and because they never have a sufficient extent of territory to satisfy their enterprising and expensive way of life. But unconnected nations, who are always wandering, and guarded by the deserts which divide them ; who can fly when they are attacked, and whose poverty preserves them from committing or suffering any injustice ; such savage nations do not feel the want of numbers. Perhaps nothing more is required, than to be able to resist the wild beasts ; occasionally to drive away an insignificant enemy, and mutually to assist each other. If they had been more populous, they would the sooner have exhausted the country they inhabit, and have been forced to remove in search of another ; the only, or, at least, the greatest misfortune attending their precarious way of life.

INDEPENDENT of these reflections, which, possibly, did not occur so strongly to the savages of Canada, the nature of things was alone sufficient to check their increase. Though they lived in a country abounding in game and fish, yet in some seasons, and sometimes for whole years, this re-

source failed them : and famine then occasioned a great destruction among people who were at too great a distance to assist each other. Their wars, or transient hostilities, the result of former animosities, were very destructive. Men constantly accustomed to hunt for their subsistence, to tear in pieces the animal they had overtaken, to hear the cries of death, and see the shedding of blood, must have been still more cruel in war, if possible, than our own people. In a word, notwithstanding all that has been said in favour of inuring children to hardships, which misled Peter the Great to such a degree, that he ordered that none of his sailors children should drink any thing but sea-water (an experiment which proved fatal to all who tried it) ; it is certain, that a great many young savages perished through hunger, thirst, cold, and fatigue. Even those whose constitution was strong enough to bear the usual exercises of those climates, to swim over the broadest rivers, to go two hundred leagues on a hunting party, to live many days without sleep, to subsist a considerable time without any food ; such men must have been exhausted, and totally unfit for the purposes of generation. Few were so long-lived as our people, whose manner of living is more uniform and tranquil.

THE austerity of a Spartan education ; the custom of inuring children to hard labour and coarse food, has been productive of dangerous mistakes. Philosophers, desirous of alleviating the miseries incident to mankind, have endeavoured to comfort the wretched who have been doomed to a life of

hardships, by persuading them that it was the most wholesome and the best. The rich have eagerly adopted a system, which served to render them insensible to the sufferings of the poor, and to dispense them from the duties of humanity and compassion. But it is an error to imagine, that men who are employed in the more laborious arts of society, live as long as those who enjoy the fruit of their toil. Moderate labour strengthens the human frame; excessive labour impairs it. A peasant is an old man at sixty; while the inhabitants of towns, who live in affluence and with some degree of moderation, frequently attain to fourscore and upwards. Even men of letters, whose employments are by no means favourable to health, afford many instances of longevity. Let not then our modern writings propagate this false and cruel error, to seduce the rich to disregard the groans of the poor, and to transfer all their tenderness from their vassals to their dogs and horses.

THREE original languages were spoken in Canada, the Algonquin, the Sioux, and the Huron. They were considered as primitive languages, because each of them contained many of those imitative words, which convey an idea of things by the sound. The dialects derived from them, were nearly as many as their towns. No abstract terms were found in these languages, because the infant mind of the savages seldom extends its view beyond the present object and the present time; and, as they have but few ideas, they seldom want to represent several under one and the same sign. Besides

sides, the language of these people, almost always animated by a quick, simple, and strong sensation, excited by the great scenes of nature, contracted a lively and poetical cast from their strong and active imagination. The astonishment and admiration which proceeded from their ignorance, gave them a strong propensity to exaggeration. They expressed what they saw ; their language painted, as it were, natural objects in strong colouring ; and their discourses were quite picturesque. For want of terms agreed upon to denote certain compound or complex ideas, they made use of figurative expressions. What was still wanting in speech, they supplied by their gestures, their attitudes, their bodily motions, and the modulations of the voice. The boldest metaphors were more familiar to them in common conversation, than they are even in epic poetry in the European languages. Their speeches in public assemblies, particularly, were full of images, energy, and pathos. No Greek or Roman orator ever spoke, perhaps, with more strength and sublimity than one of their chiefs. It was thought necessary to persuade them to remove at a distance from their native soil. *We were born, said he, on this spot, our fathers lie buried in it. Shall we say to the bones of our fathers, Arise, and come with us into a foreign land?*

It may easily be imagined that such nations could not be so gentle nor so weak as those of South America. They shewed that they had that degree of activity and strength which the people of the northern nations always possess, unless they are,

like the Laplanders, of a very different species from ourselves. They had but just attained to that degree of knowledge and civilization, to which instinct alone may lead men in the space of a few years ; and it is among such people that a philosopher may study man in his natural state.

THEY were divided into several small nations, whose form of government was nearly similar. Some had hereditary chiefs ; others, elected them ; the greater part were only directed by their old men. They were mere associations, formed by chance, and always free ; though united, they were bound by no tie. The will of individuals was not even overruled by the general one. All decisions were considered only as matter of advice, which was not binding, or enforced by any penalty. If, in one of these singular republics, a man was condemned to death, it was rather a kind of war against a common enemy, than an act of justice exercised against a subject. Instead of coercive power, good manners, example, education, a respect for old men, and parental affection, maintained peace in these societies, where there was neither law nor property. Reason, which had not been misled by prejudice, or corrupted by passion, as it is with us, served them instead of moral precepts and regulations of police. Harmony and security were maintained without the interposition of government. Authority never incroached upon that powerful instinct of nature, the love of independence ; which, enlightened by reason, produces in us the love of equality,

HENCE

HENCE arises that regard which the savages have for each other. They lavish their expressions of esteem, and expect the same in return. They are obliging, but reserved; they weigh their words, and listen with great attention. Their gravity, which appears like a kind of melancholy, is particularly observable in their national assemblies. Every one speaks in his turn, according to his age, experience, and his services. No one is ever interrupted, either by indecent reflections, or ill-timed applause. Their public affairs are managed with such disinterestedness as is unknown in our governments, where the welfare of the state is hardly ever promoted but from selfish views or party spirit. It is no uncommon thing to hear one of these savage orators, when his speech has met with universal applause, telling those who agreed to his opinion, that another man is more deserving of their confidence.

This mutual respect among the inhabitants of the same place, prevails between the several nations, when they are not in actual war. The deputies are received and treated with that friendship that is due to men who come to treat of peace and alliance. Wandering nations, who have not the least notion of increasing their territory, never negotiate for conquest, or for any interests relative to dominion. Even those who have fixed settlements, never contend with others for coming to live in their district, provided they do not molest them. The earth, say they, is made for all men; no one must possess the share of two. All the politics,



therefore, of the savages consist in forming leagues against an enemy who is too numerous or too strong, and in suspending hostilities that become too destructive. When they have agreed upon a truce or league of amity, it is ratified by mutually exchanging a belt, or string of beads, which are a kind of snail-shells. The white ones are very common; but the purple ones, which are rare, and the black, which are still more so, are much esteemed. They work them into a cylindrical form, bore them, and then make them up into necklaces. The branches are about a foot long, and the beads are strung upon them one after another in a straight line. The necklaces are broad belts, on which the beads are placed in rows, and neatly tacked down with little slips of leather. The size, weight, and colour of these shells, are adapted to the importance of the business. They serve as jewels, as records, and as annals. They are the bond of union between nations and individuals. They are the sacred and inviolable pledge which is a confirmation of words, promises, and treaties. The chiefs of towns are the keepers of these records. They know their meaning; they interpret them; and by means of these signs, they transmit the history of the country to the succeeding generation.

As the savages possess no riches, they are of a benevolent turn. A striking instance of this appears in the care they take of their orphans, widows, and infirm people. They liberally share their scanty provision with those whose crops have failed,

failed, or who have been unsuccessful in hunting or fishing. Their tables and their huts are open night and day to strangers and travellers. This generous hospitality, which makes the advantages of a private man a public blessing, is chiefly conspicuous in their entertainments. A savage claims respect, not so much from what he possesses, as from what he gives away. The whole stock of provisions collected during a chase that has lasted six months, is frequently expended in one day; and he who gives the entertainment enjoys more pleasure than his guests.

B O O K
XV.


NONE of the writers who have described the manners of the savages have reckoned benevolence among their virtues. But this may be owing to prejudice, which has made them confound antipathy and resentment with natural temper. These people neither love nor esteem the Europeans, nor are they very kind to them. The inequality of conditions, which we think so necessary for the well-being of society, is, in their opinion, the greatest folly. They are shocked to see that among us, one man has more property than several others collectively, and that this first injustice is productive of a second, which is, that the man who has most riches is on that account the most respected. But what appears to them a meanness below the brute creation is, that men who are equal by nature should degrade themselves so far as to depend upon the will or the caprice of another. The respect we shew to titles, dignities, and especially to hereditary nobility, they call an insult, an outrage

rage to human nature. Whoever knows how to guide a canoe, to beat an enemy, to build a hut, to live upon little, to go a hundred leagues in the woods, with no other guide than the wind and sun, or any provision but a bow and arrows; he acts the part of a man, and what more can be expected of him? That restless disposition which prompts us to cross so many seas in quest of fugitive advantages, appears to them rather the effect of poverty than of industry. They laugh at our arts, our manners, and all those customs which inspire us with a greater degree of vanity, in proportion as they remove us further from the state of nature. Their frankness and honesty is roused to indignation by the tricks and cunning which have been practised in our dealings with them. A multitude of other motives, some founded on prejudice, but frequently on reason, have rendered the Europeans odious to the Indians. They have made reprisals, and are become harsh and cruel in their intercourse with us. The aversion and contempt they have conceived for our manners, has always made them avoid our society. We have never been able to reconcile any of them to our indulgent manner of living; whereas we have seen some Europeans forego all the conveniencies of civil life, retire into the forests, and take up the bow and the club of the savage.

AN innate spirit of benevolence, however, sometimes brings the savages back to us. At the beginning of the winter a French vessel was wrecked upon the rocks of Anticosti. The sailors who had
 escaped

escaped the rigour of the season and the dangers of famine in this desert and savage island, built a bark out of the remains of their ship, which, in the following spring, conveyed them to the continent. They were observed in a languid and expiring state, by a hut filled with savages. *Brethren*, said the chief of this lonely family, addressing himself affectionately to them, *the wretched are entitled to our pity and our assistance. We are men, and the misfortunes incident to any of the human race affect us in the same manner as if they were our own.* These humane expressions were accompanied with every token of friendship these generous savages had it in their power to shew.

ONE thing only was wanting to complete the happiness of the free Americans, and that was the happiness of being fond of their wives. Nature, indeed, has in vain bestowed on their women a good shape, beautiful eyes, pleasing features, and long black hair. All these accomplishments are no longer regarded than while they remain in a state of independence. They no sooner submit to the matrimonial yoke, but even their husband, who is the only man they love, grows insensible to those charms they were so liberal of before marriage. The state of life, indeed, to which this condition subjects them, is by no means favourable to beauty. Their features alter, and they lose at once the desire and the power of pleasing. They are laborious, indefatigable, and active. They dig the ground, sow, and reap; while their husbands, who disdain to stoop to the drudgeries of husbandry,

dry, amuse themselves with hunting, fishing, shooting with the bow, and asserting the dominion of man over the earth.

MANY of these nations allow a plurality of wives; and even those that do not practise polygamy, have still reserved to themselves the liberty of a divorce. The very idea of an indissoluble tie, never once entered the thoughts of a people who are free till death. When those who are married disagree, they part by consent, and divide their children between them. Nothing appears to them more repugnant to nature and reason than the contrary system which prevails among christians. The great spirit, say they, hath created us all to be happy; and we should offend him, were we to live in a perpetual state of constraint and uneasiness. This system agrees with what one of the Miamis said to one of the missionaries. *My wife and I were continually at variance. My neighbour disagreed equally with his. We have exchanged wives, and are both satisfied.*

A celebrated writer, whom we cannot but admire, even when we differ from him in opinion, has observed, that love among the Americans is never productive of industry, genius, and character, as it is among the Europeans. The savages, it is said, are neither acquainted with the torments nor the delights of this most violent of all passions. But if they are not so fond of women as civilized people are, it is not, perhaps, for want of powers or inclination to population. But the first wants of nature may, perhaps, restrain in them
the

the claims of the second. Their strength is almost all exhausted in procuring their subsistence. Hunting and other expeditions leave them neither the opportunity nor the leisure of attending to the increase of their species. No wandering nation can ever be numerous. What must become of women obliged to follow their husbands a hundred leagues, with children at their breast or in their arms? What would become of the children themselves if deprived of the milk that must necessarily fail during the fatigues of the journey? Hunting prevents, and war destroys, the increase of mankind. A savage warrior resists the seducing arts of young women who strive to allure him. When nature compels this tender sex to make the first advances, and to pursue the men that avoid them; those who are less inflamed with military ardour, than with the charms of beauty, yield to the temptation. But the true warriors, who have been early taught that an intercourse with women enervates strength and courage, do not so easily surrender. It is not, therefore, owing to natural defects that Canada is unpeopled, but to the track of life pursued by its inhabitants. Though they are as fit for procreation as our northern people, all their strength is employed for their own preservation. Hunger does not permit them to attend to the passion of love. If the people of the south sacrifice every thing to this latter desire, it is because the former is easily satisfied. In a country where nature is very prolific, and man consumes but little, all the strength he has to spare is entirely turned to po-

pulation ; which is likewise assisted by the warmth of the climate. In a climate where men consume more than nature affords them without pains ; the time and the faculties of the human species are exhausted in fatigues that are detrimental to population.

BUT a further proof that the savages are not less inclined to women than we are, is, that they are much fonder of their children. Their mothers suckle them till they are four or five years old, and sometimes till six or seven. From their earliest infancy, their parents pay a regard to their natural independence, and never beat or chide them, lest they should check that free and martial spirit, which is one day to constitute their principal character. They even forbear to make use of strong arguments to persuade them, because this would be in some measure a restraint upon their will. As they are only taught what they want to know, they are the happiest children upon earth. If they die, the parents lament them with deep regret ; and will sometimes go six months after, to weep over the grave of their child ; and the mother will sprinkle it with her own milk.

THE ties of friendship among the savages are almost as strong as those of nature, and more lasting. These are never broken by that variety of clashing interests, which, in our societies, weaken even the tenderest and most sacred connections. When a man has fixed his choice, he deposits in the breast of his associate his inmost thoughts, his sentiments, his projects, his sorrows, and his joys. The two
friends

friends share every thing in common. Their union is for life; they fight side by side; and if one falls, the other constantly dies upon the body of his friend. If they are separated in some imminent danger, each calls upon the name of his friend, and invokes his spirit, as his tutelar deity.

THE savages shew a degree of penetration and sagacity, which astonishes every man who has not observed how much our arts and methods of life contribute to render our minds dull and inactive: because we are seldom under a necessity of thinking, and have only the trouble to learn. If however they fall short of perfection in every thing, as the most sagacious animals are observed to do, it is, probably, because, as they have no ideas but such as relate to their present wants, the equality that subsists between them, lays every individual under a necessity of thinking for himself, and of spending his whole life in acquiring this common stock of knowledge; hence it may be reasonably inferred, that the sum total of ideas in a society of savages is no more than the sum of ideas in each individual.

INSTEAD of abstruse meditations, the savages delight in songs. They are said to have no variety in their singing; but it is uncertain whether those who have heard them had an ear properly adapted to their music. When we first hear a foreign language spoken, the whole seems one continued sound, and appears to be pronounced with the same tone of voice, without any modulation or prosody.

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It is only by continued habit that we learn to distinguish the words and syllables, and to perceive that the sound of some is dull, and that of others sharp, as also that some are long and others short. Would it not require at least as much time to enable us to determine any thing certain with regard to the music of any nation, which must always be subordinate to their language?

THEIR dances are generally an emblem of war, and they usually dance with their weapons in their hands. There is something so regular, rapid, and terrible, in these dances, that an European, when first he sees them, cannot help being struck with horror. He imagines that the ground will in a moment be covered with blood and scattered limbs, and that none of the dancers or the spectators will survive. It is somewhat remarkable, that in the first ages of the world, and among savage nations, dancing should be an imitative art, and that it should have lost that characteristic in civilized countries, where it seems to be reduced to a set of uniform steps without meaning. But it is with dances as with languages, they grow abstracted like the ideas they are intended to represent. The signs of them are more allegorical, as the minds of the people become more refined. In the same manner as a single word, in a learned language, expresses several ideas; so, in an allegorical dance, a single step, a single attitude, is sufficient to excite a variety of sensations. It is owing to want of imagination either in the dancers, or the spectators, if
a figured

a figured dance is not, or does not appear to be, expressive. Besides, the savages can exhibit none but strong passions and ferocious manners, and these must be represented by more significant images in their dances, which are the language of gesture, the first and simplest of all languages. Nations living in a state of civil society, and in peace, have only the gentler passions to represent, which are best expressed by delicate images, fit to convey refined ideas. It might not, however, be improper sometimes to bring back dancing to its first origin, to exhibit the old simplicity of manners, to revive the first sensations of nature by motions which represent them, to depart from the antiquated and scientific mode of the Greeks and Romans, and to adopt the lively and significant images of the rude Canadians.

THESE savages, always totally devoted to the pursuit of the present passion, are extravagantly fond of gaming, as is usual with all idle people, and especially of games of chance. The same men, who are commonly so sedate, moderate, and disinterested, and have such a command of themselves, are outrageous, greedy and turbulent at play; they lose their peace, their senses, and all they are possessed of. Destitute of almost every thing, coveting all they see, and when they like it, eager to have and enjoy it, their attention is entirely turned to the most speedy and readiest way of acquiring it. This is a consequence of their manners, as well as of their character. The prospect of present happiness always prevents them from discern-

ing the evils that may ensue. Their forecast does not even reach from day to night. They are alternately silly children and violent men. Every thing depends with them on the present moment.

GAMING alone would lead them to superstition, even if they were not naturally subject to that scourge of the human race. But as they have few physicians or empirics of this kind to have recourse to, they suffer less from this distemper of the mind than more polished nations, and are better disposed to attend to the suggestions of reason which abate the violence of it. The Iroquois have a confused notion of a first Being who governs the world as he pleases. They never repine at the evil which this being permits. When some mischance befalls them, they say ; *the man above will have it so* ; and there is, perhaps, more philosophy in this submission, than in all the reasonings and declamations of our philosophers. Most other savage nations worship those two first principles of good and evil, which occur to the human mind as soon as it has acquired any conception of invisible substances. Sometimes they worship a river, a forest, the sun or the moon ; in short, any beings in which they have observed a certain power and motion ; because wherever they see motion they cannot account for, they suppose there is a soul.

THEY seem to have some notion of a future state ; but, having no principles of morality, they do not think the next life is a state of reward for virtue, and punishment for vice. They believe that the indefatigable huntsman, the fearless and mer-

cilefs warrior, who has slain or burnt many enemies, and made his own town victorious, will after death pass into a country, where he will be supplied with plenty of all kinds of animals to satisfy his hunger ; whereas those who are grown old in indolence and without glory, will be for ever banished into a barren land, where they will be eternally exposed to famine and sickness. Their tenets are suited to their manners and their wants. They believe in such pleasures and such sufferings as they are acquainted with. They have more hopes than fears, and are happy, even in their delusions. They are, however, often tormented with dreams.

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IGNORANCE is naturally prone to connect something mysterious with dreams, and to ascribe them to the agency of some powerful being, who takes the opportunity, when our faculties are suspended and lulled asleep, of watching over us in the absence of our senses. It is, as it were, a soul, distinct from our own, that glides into us, to inform us of what is to come, when we cannot yet see it ; though futurity is always present to that Being who created all things.

IN the bleak and rough climates of Canada, where the people live by hunting, their nerves are apt to be painfully affected by the inclemency of the weather, and by fatigue and long abstinence. Then these savages have melancholy and troublesome dreams ; they imagine they are surrounded with enemies ; they see their town surprised, and deluged in blood ; they receive injuries and wounds ; their wives, their children, their friends,

are carried off. When they awake, they take these visions for a warning from the gods; and that fear which first inspired them with this idea, adds to their natural ferocity, by the melancholy cast it gives to their thoughts, and their gloomy complexions. The old women, who are useless in the world, dream for the safety of the commonwealth. Some weak old men also, like them too, dream on public affairs, in which they have no share or influence. Young men who are unfit for war, or laborious exercises, will dream too, that they may bear some part in the administration of the clan. In vain hath it been attempted, during two centuries, to remove illusions so deeply rooted. The savages have constantly replied, *You christians laugh at the faith we have in dreams, and yet require us to believe things infinitely more improbable.* Thus we see in these untutored nations the seeds of priestcraft, with all its train of evils.

WERE it not for these melancholy fits and dreams, there would scarce ever be any contentions among them. Europeans who have lived long in those countries, assure us they never saw an Indian in a passion. Without superstition, there would be as few national as private quarrels.

PRIVATE differences are most commonly adjusted by the majority of the people. The respect shewn by the nation to the aggrieved party, soothes his self-love, and disposes him to peace. It is more difficult to prevent quarrels, or put an end to hostilities between two nations.

WAR often takes its rise from hunting. When two companies, which were separated by a forest a hundred leagues in extent, happen to meet, and to interfere with each other's sport, they soon quarrel, and turn those weapons against one another which were intended for the destruction of bears. This slight skirmish is a source of eternal discord. The vanquished party vows implacable vengeance against the conquerors, a national hatred which will be maintained by their posterity, and be re-kindled from their ashes. The mutual wounds which both parties suffer in skirmishes of this kind, sometimes put a stop to these contentions ; when on each side they happen to be occasioned by some impetuous young men, who in the heat of youth may have been tempted to remove to a considerable distance, in order to make a trial of their military skill. But the contentions between whole nations are not easily excited.

THE declaration of war, when it appears necessary, is not left to the judgment and decision of one man. The nation meets, and the chief speaks. He states the nature of the injury and causes of complaint. The matter is considered ; the dangers and the consequences of a rupture are weighed. The orators speak directly to the point, without hesitation, without digression, or without mistaking the case. The arguments are discussed with a strength of reasoning and eloquence that arises from the evidence and simplicity of the matter in dispute ; and even with an impartiality which is less affected by their strong passions, than it is

among us by a combination of ideas. If war be unanimously determined by their giving a general shout, the allies are invited to join in it, which they seldom refuse, as they always have some injury to revenge, or some slain to replace by prisoners.

THE savages next proceed to the election of a chief, or captain of the expedition; and great stress is laid upon physiognomy. This might be a very fallacious, and even ridiculous, way of forming a judgment of men, where they have been trained up from their infancy to disguise their real sentiments, and where, by a constant practice of dissimulation and artificial passions, the countenance is no longer expressive of the mind. But a savage, who is solely guided by nature, and is acquainted with its workings, is seldom mistaken in the judgment he forms at first sight. The chief requisite, next to a warlike aspect, is a strong voice; because, in armies that march without drums or clarions, in order more effectually to surprise the enemy, nothing is so proper to sound an alarm, or to give the signal for the onset, as the terrible voice of a chief who shouts and strikes at the same time. But the best recommendations for a general are his exploits. Every one is at liberty to boast of his victories, in order that he may be the first to expose himself to march foremost to meet danger; to tell what he has done, in order to shew what he will do; and the savages think self commendation not unbecoming a hero who can shew his scars.

HE who is chosen to be chief, and to lead on the rest in the path of glory, never fails to harangue them. "Comrades, says he, the bones of our brethren are still uncovered. They cry out against us; we must satisfy them. Young men, to arms; fill your quivers; paint yourselves with gloomy colours that may strike terror. Let the woods ring with our war-songs. Let us sooth the dead with the shouts of vengeance. Let us go and bathe in the blood of our enemies, take prisoners, and fight as long as water shall flow in the rivers, and as long as the sun and moon shall remain fixed in the firmament."

AT these words those brave men, who are eager for war, go to the chief, and say, *We will share the danger with thee. So you shall*, replies the chief; *we will share it together*. But as no persuasions are made use of to induce any one to join the army, lest a false point of honour should compel men of no courage to take the field, a man must undergo many trials before he can be admitted as a soldier. If a young man, who has never yet faced the enemy, should betray the least impatience, when, after long abstinence, he is exposed to the scorching heat of the sun, the intense frosts of the night, or the stings of insects, he would be declared incapable and unworthy to bear arms. Are the soldiers of our militias and armies formed in this manner? On the contrary, what a mournful and ominous ceremony is ours! Men who have not been able to escape being pressed into the service, or could not procure an exemption by purchase,

or by virtue of some privilege, march heavily along, with downcast looks, and pale dejected faces, before a magistrate, whose office is odious to the people, and whose honesty is doubtful. The afflicted and trembling parents seem to be following their son to the grave. A black scroll, issuing from a fatal urn, points out the victims which the prince devotes to war. A distracted mother in vain presses her son to her bosom, and strives to detain him; he is torn from her arms, and she bids him an eternal farewell, cursing the day of her marriage, and that of her delivery. It is not certainly by such sacrifices that good soldiers are to be acquired. It is not with such scenes of distress and consternation that the savages go to meet victory. They march out in the midst of festivity, singing and dancing. The young married women follow their husbands for a day or two, without shewing any signs of grief or sorrow. These women, who do not even utter a groan in the pangs of child-birth, would scorn to soften the minds of the defenders and avengers of their country, by the tears even of tenderness and compassion.

THE weapons of these savage nations are a kind of spear, armed with sharp bones, and a small club of very hard wood, of a round figure, and with one cutting edge. Instead of this last, since their acquaintance with the Europeans, they make use of a hatchet, which they manage with amazing dexterity. Most of them have no instrument of defence; but if they attack the palisades that surround a town, they cover their body with a thin plank.

plank. Some of them used to wear a kind of cuirass made with plaited reeds; but they left it off, on finding it was not proof against fire arms. BOOK
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THE army is followed by dreamers, who assume the name of jugglers, and are too often suffered to determine the military operations. They march without any colours. All the warriors, who are almost naked, that they may be the more alert in battle, rub their bodies with coal, to appear more terrible, or with mould, that they may not be so easily seen at a distance, and by that means better able to surprise the enemy. Notwithstanding their natural intrepidity and aversion for all disguise, their wars are carried on with artifice. These stratagems, common to all nations, whether savage or civilized, are become necessary to the petty nations of Canada. They would have totally destroyed one another, had they not made the glory of their chiefs to consist in bringing home all their companions, rather than in shedding the blood of their foes. Honour, therefore, is to be gained by falling upon the enemy before he is prepared. These people, whose senses have never been impaired, are extremely quick in their smell, and can discover the places where men have trod. By the keenness of that and of their sight, it is said they can trace footsteps that are made upon the shortest grass, upon the dry ground, and even upon stone; and from the nature of the footsteps can discover to what nation the adventurers belong. Perhaps, they may do this by the leaves from the forests which always cover the ground.

WHEN

WHEN they are so fortunate as to surprise the enemy, they discharge a whole volley of arrows, and fall upon them with their clubs or hatchets. If they are upon their guard, or well intrenched, they retreat if they can ; if not, they fight till they conquer or die. The victorious party dispatch the wounded whom they cannot carry off, scalp the dead, and take some prisoners.

THE conqueror leaves his hatchet upon the field of battle, having previously engraven upon it the mark of his nation, that of his family, and especially his own picture ; that is to say, an oval with the figures marked on his own face. Others paint all these ensigns of honour, or rather trophies of victory, on the stump of a tree, or on a piece of the bark, with coal mixed up with several colours. To this they add the history, not only of the battle, but of the whole campaign in hieroglyphic characters. Next to the picture of the general, the numbers of his soldiers are marked by so many lines ; of the prisoners pointed out by so many little images, and that of the dead by so many human figures without heads. Such are the expressive and technical signs which, in all original societies, have preceded the art of writing and printing, and the voluminous libraries which fill the palaces of the rich and idle, and embarrass the minds of the learned.

THE history of an Indian war is but a short one ; they make haste to describe it, for fear the enemy should rally and fall upon them. The conqueror glories in a precipitate retreat, and never stops

stops till he reaches his own territory and his own town. There he is received with the warmest transports of joy, and finds his reward in the applauses of his countrymen. A debate then ensues, how the prisoners, who are the only advantage of their victory, shall be disposed of.

THE most fortunate of the captives are those who are chosen to replace the warriors who fell in the late action, or in former battles. This adoption has been wisely contrived, to perpetuate nations which would soon be destroyed by frequent wars. The prisoners being once incorporated into a family, become cousins, uncles, fathers, brothers, husbands; in short, they succeed to any degree of consanguinity, in which the deceased stood, whose place they supply; and these affectionate titles convey all their rights to them, at the same time that they bind them to all their engagements. Far from being averse for attaching themselves with all proper affection to the family that has adopted them, they will not refuse even to take up arms against their own countrymen. Yet this is surely a strange inversion of the ties of nature. They must be very weak men, thus to shift the object of their regard with the vicissitudes of fortune. The truth is, that war seems to cancel all the bonds of nature, and to confine a man's feelings to himself alone. Hence arises that union between friends among the savages, which is observed to be stronger than that which subsists between relations. Those who are to fight and die together, are more firmly attached than those who are born together, or
under

under the same roof. When war or death has dissolved that consanguinity which is cemented by nature, or has been formed by choice, the same fate which loads the savage with chains, gives him new relations and friends. Custom and common consent have authorised this singular law, which undoubtedly sprang from necessity.

BUT it sometimes happens that a prisoner refuses this adoption; sometimes that he is excluded from it. A tall handsome prisoner had lost several of his fingers in battle. This circumstance was not noticed at first. *Friend*, said the widow to whom he was allotted, *we had chosen you to live with us; but in the condition you appear, unable to fight and to defend us, of what use is life to you! Death is certainly preferable. I am of the same opinion*, answered the savage. *Well then*, replied the woman, *this evening you shall be tied to the stake. For your own glory, and for the honour of our family who have adopted you, remember to behave like a man of courage.* He promised he would, and kept his word. For three days he endured the most cruel torments with a constancy and cheerfulness that set them all at defiance. His new family never forsook him, but encouraged him by their applause, and supplied him with drink and tobacco in the midst of his sufferings. What a mixture of virtue and ferocity! Every thing is great in these people who are not enslaved. This is the sublime of nature in all its horrors and its beauties.

THE captives whom none chuse to adopt, are soon condemned to death. The victims are prepared

pared for it by every thing that may tend to inspire them with a fondness for life. The best fare, the kindest usage, the most endearing names, are lavished upon them. They are even sometimes indulged with women to the very moment of their sentence. Is this compassion, or is it a refinement of barbarity? At last a herald comes, and acquaints the wretch that the pile is ready. *Brother, says he, be patient, you are going to be burnt. Very well, brother, says the prisoner, I thank you.*

THESE words are received with general applause; but the women are the most violent in their expressions of the common joy. She to whom the prisoner is delivered up, instantly invokes the shade of a father, a husband, a son, the dearest friend, whose death is still unrevenged. *Draw near, she cries, I am preparing a feast for thee. Come and drink large draughts of the broth I intend to give thee. This warrior is going to be put into the cauldron. They will apply hot hatchets all over his body: They will pull off his hair: They will drink out of his skull: Thou shalt be avenged and satisfied.*

THIS furious woman then rushes upon her victim, who is tied to a post near the fiery pile, and by striking or maiming him, she gives the signal for the intended cruelties. There is not woman, or child, in the clan whom this sight has brought together, who does not take a part in torturing and slaying the miserable captive. Some pierce his flesh with firebrands; others cut it in slices; some tear off his nails; while others cut off his fingers, roast them, and devour them before his face. Nothing
stops

stops his executioners but the fear of hastening his end : they study to prolong his sufferings for whole days, and sometimes they make him linger for a week.

IN the midst of these torments, the hero with great composure sings his death-song ; insults his enemies, upbraids them for their weakness, tells them they know not how to revenge the death of their relations whom he has slain, and excites them by outrages or intreaties to a further exertion of their cruelties. It is a conflict between the victim and his tormentors ; a dreadful challenge between constancy in suffering, and obstinacy in torturing. But the sense of glory predominates. Whether this intoxication of enthusiasm suspends, or wholly benumbs, all sense of pain ; or whether custom and education alone produce these prodigies of heroism, certain it is, that the sufferer dies without ever shedding a tear or heaving a sigh.

How shall we account for this insensibility ? Is it owing to the climate, or to the manner of life ? Colder blood, thicker humors, a constitution rendered more phlegmatic by the dampness of the air and the ground, may doubtless blunt the irritability of the nervous system in Canada. Men who are constantly exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, the fatigues of hunting, and the perils of war, contract such a rigidity of fibres, such a habit of suffering, as makes them insensible to pain. It is said the savages are scarce ever convulsed in the agonies of death, whether they die of sickness or of a wound. As they have no apprehensions,
either

either of the approaches or the consequences of death, their imagination does not suggest that artificial sensibility against which nature has guarded them. Their whole life, whether considered in a natural or moral view, is calculated to inspire them with a contempt for death, which we so much dread ; and to enable them to overcome the sense of pain, which is increased by our indulgences.

BUT a circumstance still more astonishing in the character of the Indians than their resolution in supporting tortures, is the rancour that appears in their revenge. It is dreadful to think that man may become the most cruel of all animals. In general, revenge is not prosecuted with cruelty either among nations, or between individuals who are governed by good laws ; which, at the same time that they protect the subject, restrain him from committing injuries. Vengeance is not a very lively principle in wars that are carried on between great nations, because they have but little to fear from their enemies. But in those petty nations, where a considerable share of the power of the state belongs to each individual, where the loss of one man endangers the whole community, war is nothing else than a spirit of revenge that actuates the whole body. Among independent men, who entertain a degree of esteem for themselves which can never be felt by men who are under subjection ; among savages whose affections are very lively and confined to a few objects, injuries must necessarily be represented to the greatest degree, because they affect the person in the most sensible manner : the assassination of a friend, of a son, of a brother, or of a fellow

fellow citizen, must be avenged by the death of the assassin. These beloved shades are continually calling out for vengeance from their graves. They wander about in the forests, amidst the mournful accents of the birds of night; they appear in the phosphorus and in the lightening; and superstition pleads for them in the afflicted or incensed hearts of their friends.

WHEN we consider the hatred which the hordes of these savages bear to each other; the hardships they undergo; the scarcity they are often exposed to; the frequency of their wars; the small number of inhabitants; the numberless snares we lay for them; we cannot but foresee that, in less than three centuries, the whole race will be extinct. What judgment will posterity form of this species of men, who will exist only in the descriptions of travellers? Will not the accounts given of the savages appear to them in the same light as the fables of antiquity do to us? It will speak of them, as the Centaurs and Lapithæ are spoken of at present. How many contradictions will not posterity discover in their customs and manners! Will not such of our writings as may then have escaped the destructive hand of time, pass for romantic inventions, like those which Plato has left us concerning the ancient Atlantica?

The French imprudently take a part in the wars of the savages.

THE character of the North-Americans, as we have described it, had singularly displayed itself in the war between the Iroquois and the Algonquins. These two nations, the largest in Canada, had formed a kind of confederacy. The former,

former, who tilled the ground, imparted their productions to their allies, who in return shared with them the fruits of their chase. Connected by their reciprocal wants, they mutually defended each other. During the season when all the labours of agriculture were interrupted by the snow on the ground, they lived together. The Algonquins went a hunting; and the Iroquois staid at home, to skin the beasts, cure the flesh, and dress the hides.

It happened one year that a party of Algonquins, who were not very dextrous, or much used to the chase, proved unsuccessful. The Iroquois, who attended them, desired leave to try whether they should succeed better. This request, which had sometimes been complied with, was not granted. Irritated at this unseasonable refusal, they went out privately in the night, and brought home a great number of animals. The Algonquins greatly mortified, to blot out the very remembrance of their disgrace, waited till the Iroquois huntsmen were asleep, and put them all to death. This massacre occasioned a great alarm. The offended nation demanded justice, which was haughtily refused; and they were given to understand that they must not expect the smallest satisfaction.


THE Iroquois, enraged at this contemptuous treatment, vowed that they would either be revenged, or that they would perish in the attempt. But, not being powerful enough to venture to attack their haughty adversaries, they removed to a greater distance in order to try their strength,



and improve their military skill, by making war against some less formidable nations. As soon as they had learnt to approach like foxes, to attack like lions, and to fly like birds, as they express themselves, they were no longer afraid to encounter the Algonquins; and, therefore, carried on a war against them with a degree of rancour proportionable to their resentment.

It was just at the time when these animosities were kindled throughout Canada, that the French made their first appearance in that country. The Montagnez, who inhabited the lower parts of the river St. Lawrence; the Algonquins, who were settled upon its banks, from Quebec to Montreal; the Hurons, who were dispersed about the lake that bears that name; and some less considerable nations, who wandered about in the intermediate spaces; were all inclined to favour the settlement of the strangers: these several nations combined against the Iroquois, and, unable to withstand them, imagined that they might find in their new guests an unexpected resource, which would insure them success. From the opinion they entertained of the French, which seemed as if it were formed upon a thorough knowledge of their character, they flattered themselves they might engage them in their quarrel, and were not disappointed. Champlain, who ought to have availed himself of the superior knowledge of the Europeans to effect a reconciliation between the Americans, did not even attempt it. He warmly espoused the interests.

rests of his neighbours, and accompanied them in pursuit of their enemy.

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THE country of the Iroquois was near eighty leagues in length, and more than forty in breadth. It was bounded by the lake Erie, the lake Ontario, the river St. Lawrence, and the celebrated countries since known by the names of New-York and Pennsylvania. The space between these vast limits was watered by several fine rivers, and was inhabited by five nations, which could bring about twenty thousand warriors into the field; though they are now reduced to less than fifteen hundred. They formed a kind of league or association, not unlike that of the Switzers or the Dutch. Their deputies met once a year, to hold their feast of union, and to deliberate on the interests of the commonwealth.

THOUGH the Iroquois did not expect to be again attacked by enemies who had so often been conquered, they were not unprepared. The engagement was begun with equal hopes on both sides; one relying on their usual superiority; the other on the assistance of their new ally, whose fire-arms could not fail of insuring the victory. And, indeed, no sooner had Champlain and the two Frenchmen who attended him fired a shot, which killed two chiefs of the Iroquois, and mortally wounded a third, than the whole army fled in the utmost amazement and consternation.

THIS alteration in the mode of attack induced them to think of changing their mode of defence. In the next campaign, they judged it necessary to

intrench themselves, to elude the force of weapons they were unacquainted with. But their precaution was ineffectual. Notwithstanding an obstinate resistance, their intrenchments were forced by the Indians, supported by a brisker fire from a greater number of Frenchmen than appeared in the first expedition. The Iroquois were almost all killed or taken. Those who had escaped from the engagement were precipitated into a river and drowned.

THIS nation would probably have been destroyed, or compelled to live in peace, had not the Dutch, who in 1610 founded the colony of New Belgia in their neighbourhood, furnished them with arms and ammunition. Possibly too they might secretly foment their divisions, the furs taken from the enemy during the continuance of hostilities being a greater object than those they could procure from their own chase. However this may be, this connection restored the balance between both parties. Various hostilities and injuries were committed by each nation, which weakened the strength of both. This perpetual ebb and flow of success, which, in governments actuated by motives of interest rather than of revenge, would infallibly have restored tranquillity, served but to increase animosities, and to exasperate a number of little clans, bent upon each other's destruction. The consequence was, that the weakest of these petty nations were soon destroyed; and the rest were gradually reduced to nothing.

The
French
settlement
makes no
progress.
The cause
of this.

THESE destructive events did not however contribute to advance the power of the French. In 1626 they had only three wretched settlements, surrounded with pales. The largest of these contained but fifty inhabitants, including men, women, and children. The climate had not proved destructive to the people sent there: though severe, it was wholesome, and the Europeans strengthened their constitutions without endangering their lives. The little progress they made was entirely owing to an exclusive company, whose chief designs were not so much intended to create a national power in Canada, as to enrich themselves by the fur trade. This evil might have been immediately removed, by abolishing this monopoly, and allowing a free trade; but it was not then time to adopt so simple a theory. The government, however, chose only to employ a more numerous association, composed of men of greater property and credit.

THEY gave them the disposal of the settlements that were or should be formed in Canada, together with a power of fortifying and governing them as they thought proper, and of making war or peace, as should best promote their interest. The whole trade by sea and land was allowed them for a term of fifteen years, except the cod and whale fisheries, which were left open to all. The beaver and all the fur trade was granted to the company for ever.

To all these were added further encouragements. The king made the company a present of two

large ships, consisting of seven hundred men. Twelve of the principal were raised to the rank of nobility. Gentlemen, and even the clergy, already too rich, were invited to share in this trade. The company were allowed the liberty of sending and exporting all kinds of commodities and merchandize, free of any duty whatsoever. A person, who exercised any trade in the colony for the space of six years, was entitled to the freedom of the same trade in France. The last favour granted them was the free entry of all goods manufactured in those distant regions. This singular privilege gave the workmen of New France an infinite advantage over those of the mother-country, who were encumbered with a variety of duties, letters of master-ship, charges for stamps, and with all the impediments which ignorance and avarice had multiplied without end.

IN return for so many marks of partiality, the company, which had a capital of a hundred thousand crowns *, engaged to bring into the colony, in the year 1628, which was the first year they enjoyed their privilege, two or three hundred artificers of such trades as were fittest for their purpose; and sixteen thousand men before the year 1643. They were to provide them with lodging and board, to maintain them for three years, and afterwards to give them as much cleared land as would be necessary for their subsistence, with a sufficient quantity of grain to sow it the first year.

FORTUNE did not second the endeavours of government in favour of the new company. The first ships they fitted out were taken by the English, who were lately at variance with France, on account of the siege of Rochelle. Richelieu and Buckingham, who were enemies from jealousy, from personal character, from state interest, and from every motive that can excite an irreconcilable enmity between two ambitious ministers, took this opportunity to spirit up the two kings they governed, and the two nations they wanted to oppress. The English, who fought for their interests, gained the advantage over the French; and the latter lost Canada in 1629. The council of Lewis XIII. were so little acquainted with the value of this settlement, that they were inclined not to demand the restitution of it; but the pride of the leading man, who, being at the head of the company, considered the encroachments of the English as a personal insult, prevailed with them to alter their opinion. They met with less difficulty than they expected; and Canada was restored to the French in 1632 by the treaty of St. Germain en Laye.

THE French were not taught by adversity. The same ignorance, the same negligence, prevailed after the recovery of Canada as before. The monopolizing company fulfilled none of their engagements. This breach of promise, far from being punished, was, in a manner, rewarded by a prolongation of their charter. The clamours of all Canada were disregarded at such a distance; and

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the deputies, sent to represent its wretched situation, were denied access to the throne, where timid truth is never suffered to approach, but is awed into silence by threats and punishments. This behaviour, equally repugnant to humanity, private interest and good policy, was attended with such consequences as might naturally be expected from it. Commerce declined, as the communication was too dangerous. The Indians, weakly supported by their allies the French, were continually flying before their old enemy, whom they were accustomed to dread. The Iroquois, resuming their superiority, openly boasted that they should compel the strangers to quit the country, after having seized upon some of their children, to replace such as they had lost of their own. The French themselves, forgotten by their mother-country, and unable to gather-in their scanty crops without hazard of their lives, were determined to abandon a settlement so ill supported. Such was the deplorable state of the colony, that it was reduced to subsist upon the charities which the missionaries received from Europe.

The French are roused from their inactivity. Means by which this change was effected.

THE French ministry, at length awakened from their lethargy by that general commotion which at that time agitated every nation, sent a body of four hundred well disciplined troops to Canada in 1662. This corps was reinforced two years after by the regiment of Carignan. The French gradually recovered an absolute superiority over the Iroquois. Three of their nations, alarmed at their losses, made proposals for an accommodation; and the

the other two were so much weakened, that they were induced to accede to it in 1668. At this time the colony first enjoyed a profound peace; which paved the way for its prosperity, and a freedom of trade contributed to secure it. The beaver trade alone continued to be monopolized.

THIS revolution in affairs excited industry. The former colonists, whose weakness had till then confined them within their settlements, now ventured to extend their plantations, and cultivated them with greater confidence and success. All the soldiers, who consented to settle in this part of the world, obtained their discharge, together with a grant of some property. The officers had lands given them in proportion to their rank. The former settlements were improved; and new ones established, wherever the interest or safety of the colony required it. This spirit and activity occasioned an increase of traffic with the Indians, and revived the intercourse between both continents. This prosperity seemed likely to receive additional advantages from the care taken by the superintendants of the colony, not only to preserve friendship with the neighbouring nations, but likewise to establish peace and harmony among themselves. Not a single act of hostility was committed throughout a tract of four or five hundred leagues; a circumstance, perhaps, unheard-of before in North America. It should seem that the French had kindled the war at their arrival, only to extinguish it the more effectually.

BUT this concord could not continue among people who were always armed for the chace, unless the power that had effected it should preserve it by the superiority of its forces. The Iroquois, finding this precaution was neglected, resumed that restless disposition arising from their love of revenge and dominion. They were, however, careful to continue on good terms with all who were either allies or neighbours to the French. Notwithstanding this moderation, they were told that they must immediately lay down their arms, and restore all the prisoners they had taken, or expect to see their country destroyed, and their habitations burnt down. This haughty summons incensed their pride. They answered, that they should never suffer the least encroachment on their independence; and that they should make the French sensible, that they were friends not to be neglected, and enemies not to be despised. But, as they were staggered with the air of authority that had been assumed, they complied in part with the terms required of them, and the affair was thus compromised.

BUT this kind of humiliation rather increased the resentment of a people more accustomed to commit than to suffer injuries. The English, who in 1664 had dispossessed the Dutch of New Belgia, and remained masters of the territory they had acquired, which they had called New York, availed themselves of the dispositions of the Iroquois. They not only excited the spirit of discord, but added presents to induce them to break with the French.

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The same artifices were used to seduce the rest of their allies. Those who adhered to their allegiance were attacked. All were invited, and some compelled, to bring their beaver and other furs to New York, where they sold at a higher price than in the French colony. BOOK
XV.

DENONVILLE, who had lately been sent to Canada to enforce obedience to the authority of the proudest of monarchs, was impatient of all these insults. Though he was in a condition not only to defend his own frontiers, but even to encroach upon those of the Iroquois; yet, sensible that this nation must not be attacked without being destroyed, it was agreed that the French should remain in a state of seeming inaction, till they had received from Europe the necessary reinforcements for executing so desperate a resolution. These succours arrived in 1687; and the colony had then 11,249 persons, of whom about one third were able to bear arms.

NOTWITHSTANDING this superiority of forces, Denonville had recourse to stratagem; and dishonoured the French name among the savages by an infamous perfidy. Under pretence of terminating their differences by negotiation, he basely abused the confidence which the Iroquois reposed in the Jesuit Lamberville, to allure their chiefs to a conference. As soon as they arrived, they were put in irons, embarked at Quebec, and sent to the galleys.

ON the first report of this treachery, the old men sent for their missionary, and addressed him in
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the following manner: "We are authorized by every motive to treat you as an enemy, but we cannot resolve to do it. Your heart has had no share in the insult that has been put upon us; and it would be unjust to punish you for a crime you detest still more than ourselves. But you must leave us. Our rash young men might consider you in the light of a traitor, who has delivered up the chiefs of our nation to shameful slavery." After this speech, these savages, whom the Europeans have always called barbarians, gave the missionary some guides, who conducted him to a place of safety; and then both parties took up arms.

THE French presently spread terror among the Indians bordering upon the great lakes; but Denonville had neither the activity nor the expedition necessary to improve these first successes. While he was taken up in deliberating, instead of acting, the campaign was closed without the acquisition of any permanent advantage. This increased the boldness of the Iroquois who lived near the French settlements, where they repeatedly committed the most dreadful ravages. The planters, finding their labours destroyed by these depredations, which deprived them of the means of repairing the damages they had sustained, ardently wished for peace. Denonville's temper coincided with their wishes; but it was no easy matter to pacify an enemy rendered implacable by ill-usage. Lamberville, who still maintained his former ascendent over them, made overtures of peace, which were listened to.

WHILE

WHILE these negotiations were carrying on, a Machiavel, born in the forests, known by the name of Le Rat, the bravest, the most resolute, the most intelligent savage ever found in the wilds of North America, arrived at Fort Frontenac with a chosen band of Hurons, fully determined upon exploits worthy of the reputation he had acquired. He was told that a treaty was actually on foot; that the deputies of the Iroquois were upon the road to conclude it at Montreal; and that it would be an insult upon the French governor if they should carry on their hostilities against a nation with which they were negotiating a peace.

LE RAT, piqued that the French should thus enter into negotiations without consulting their allies, resolved to punish them for their presumption. He lay in wait for the deputies; some of which were killed, and the rest taken prisoners. When the latter told him the purport of their voyage, he feigned the greater surprise, as Denonville, he said, had sent him to intercept them. In order to carry on the deceit more successfully, he immediately released them all, except one, whom he pretended to keep, to replace one of his Hurons who had been killed in the fray. He then hastened to Michillimakinac, where he presented his prisoner to the French commandant, who, not knowing that Denonville was treating with the Iroquois, caused the unhappy savage to be put to death. Immediately after this, Le Rat sent for an old Iroquois, who had long been a prisoner among the Hurons, and gave him his liberty to go and acquaint



acquaint his nation, that, while the French were amusing their enemies with negotiations, they continued to take prisoners and murder them. This artifice, worthy of the most infamous European policy, succeeded as the savage Le Rat desired. The war was renewed with greater fury than ever, and lasted the longer, as the English, who were lately at variance with France, on account of the deposition of James II, thought it their interest to make an alliance with the Iroquois.

AN English fleet, which sailed from Europe in 1690, appeared before Quebec in October, to lay siege to the place. They had reason to expect but a faint resistance, as the savages were to make a powerful diversion, to draw off the principal land forces of the colony. But they were compelled shamefully to relinquish the enterprise, after having sustained great losses. The causes of this disappointed merit some discussion.

WHEN the British ministry projected the reduction of Canada, they determined that the land and sea forces should arrive there at the same time. This wise plan was executed with the utmost exactness. As the ships were sailing up the river St. Lawrence, the troops marched by land, in order to reach the scene of action at the same instant as the fleet. They were nearly arrived, when the Iroquois who conducted and supported them, recollected the hazard they ran in leading their allies to the conquest of Quebec. Situated as we are, said they, in a council they held, between two European nations, each powerful enough to destroy us, both inter-
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terested in our destruction, when they no longer stand in need of our assistance; what better measure can we take, than to prevent the one from being victorious over the other? Then will each of them be compelled to court our alliance, or to bribe us to a neutrality. This system, which seemed to be dictated by the same kind of deep policy as that which directs the balance of Europe, determined the Iroquois to return to their respective homes under various pretences. Their defection obliged the English to retreat; and the French, now in security on their lands, united all their forces with as much unanimity as success for the defence of their capital.

THE Iroquois, from motives of policy, stifled their resentment against the French, and were attached rather to the name than to the interests of England. These two European powers, therefore, irreconcilable rivals to each other, but separated by the territory of a savage nation, equally apprehensive of the superiority of either, were prevented from doing each other so much injury as they could have wished. The war was carried on merely by a few depredations, fatal to the colonists, but of little consequence to the several nations concerned in them. During the scene of cruelties exercised by the several parties of English and Iroquois, French and Hurons, whose ravages extended one hundred leagues from home, some actions were performed, which seemed to render human nature superior to such enormities.

SOME French and Indians having joined in an expedition that required a long march, their provisions began to fail. The Hurons caught plenty of game, and always offered some to the French, who were not such skilful huntsmen. The latter would have declined accepting this generous offer; *You share with us the fatigues of war*, said the savages: *it is but reasonable that we should share with you the necessities of life; we should not be men if we acted otherwise with men.* If similar instances of magnanimity may have sometimes occurred among Europeans, the following is peculiar to savages.

A party of Iroquois being informed that a party of the French and their allies were advancing with superior forces, they fled with precipitation. They were headed by Onontague, who was a hundred years old. He scorned to fly with the rest, and chose rather to fall into the hands of the enemy; though he had nothing to expect but exquisite torments. What a spectacle, to see four hundred barbarians eager in tormenting an old man; who, far from complaining, treated the French with the utmost contempt, and upbraided the Hurons with having stooped to be the slaves of those vile Europeans! One of his tormentors, provoked at his invectives, stabbed him in three places, to put an end to his repeated insults. *Thou dost wrong*, said Onontague calmly to him, *to shorten my life; thou wouldst have had more time to learn to die like a man.* And are these the men whom the French and English have been conspiring to extirpate for
a century

a century past? But, perhaps, they would be ashamed to live among such models of heroism and magnanimity.

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THE peace of Ryswick put a sudden end to the calamities of Europe and the hostilities in America. The Hurons and the Iroquois, as well as the French and English, were sensible that they required a long continuance of peace, to repair the losses they had sustained in war. The Indians began to recover themselves; the Europeans resumed their labours; and the fur trade, the first that could be entered into with a nation of hunters, was more firmly established.

BEFORE the discovery of Canada, the forests with which it was over-run were little more than the extensive haunt of wild beasts, which had multiplied prodigiously; because the few men who lived in those deserts having no flocks or tame animals, left more room and more food for such as were wandering and free like themselves. If the nature of the climate did not afford an infinite variety, each species produced, at least, a multitude of individuals. But they at last paid tribute to the sovereignty of man, that cruel power which hath always been exercised in a manner so fatal to every living creature. Having neither arts nor husbandry to employ them, the savages fed and clothed themselves entirely with the wild beasts they destroyed. As soon as luxury had led us to make use of their skins, the natives waged a perpetual war against them; which was the more active, as it procured them plenty, and a variety of gratifications which

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they were unaccustomed to ; and the more destructive, as they had adopted the use of our fire-arms. This fatal industry exercised in the woods of Canada, occasioned a great quantity and prodigious variety of furs to be brought into the ports of France ; some of which were consumed in the kingdom, and the rest disposed of in the neighbouring countries. Most of these furs were already known in Europe ; they came from the northern parts of our hemisphere, but in too small quantities to supply a general demand. Caprice and novelty have made them more or less in fashion, since it has been found to be for the interest of the American colonies that they should be valued in the mother countries. It may not be improper to give some account of those that are still in request.

THE otter is a voracious animal, which runs or swims along the banks or the lakes of rivers, commonly lives upon fish, and when that fails, will feed upon grass, or the rind of aquatic plants. From his manner and place of living he has been ranked amongst amphibious animals, who can equally live in the air and under water ; but improperly, since the otter, like all other land animals, cannot live without respiration. He is found in all those countries which abound in water, and are temperate, but is more common and much larger in the northern parts of America. His hair is no where so black or so fine ; a circumstance the more fatal to him, as it exposes him more to the pursuits of man.

THE pole-cat is in equal estimation among the Canadian huntsmen. There are three species of this animal; the first is the common pole-cat; the second is called the mink; and the third, the stinking pole-cat, because his urine, which he voids in his fright when he is pursued, is so offensive that it infects the air at a great distance. Their hair is darker, more glossy, and more silky than in Europe.

EVEN the rat in North-America is valuable for his skin. There are two sorts especially whose skin is an article of trade. The one, which is called the Opossum, is twice as large as an European rat. His hair is commonly of a silver grey; sometimes of a clear white. The female has a bag under her belly, which she can open and shut at pleasure. When she is pursued, she puts her young ones into this bag, and runs away with them. The other, which is called the musk-rat, because his testicles contain musk, has all the characteristic qualities of the beaver, of which he seems to be a diminutive, and his skin is employed for the same purposes.

THE Ermine, which is about the size of a squirrel, but not quite so long, has the same lively eyes, keen look, and his motions are so quick that the eye cannot follow them. The tip of his long and bushy tail is as black as jet. His hair, which is as yellow as gold in summer, turns as white as snow in winter. This lively and light animal is one of the beauties of Canada; but, though smaller than the Sable, is not so common.

THE martin is only to be met with in cold countries, in the center of the forests, far from all habitations, is a beast of prey, and lives upon birds. Though it is but a foot and a half long, it leaves prints on the snow, that appear to be the footsteps of a very large animal; because it always jumps along, and leaves the marks of both feet together. Its fur is much esteemed, though far inferior to that species which is distinguished by the name of the Sable. This is of a shining black. The finest among the others is that whose skin is the most brown, and reaches along the back quite to the tip of the tail. The martins seldom quit the inmost recesses of their impenetrable woods more than once in two or three years. The natives think it portends a good winter; that is, a great quantity of snow, and consequently good sport.

THE animal which the ancients called Lynx, known in Siberia by the name of the Ounce, is only called the wild-cat in Canada, where it is smaller than in our hemisphere. This animal, to whom vulgar error would not have attributed very piercing eyes, if he were not endowed with the faculty of seeing, hearing and smelling at a distance, lives upon what game he can catch, which he pursues to the very tops of the tallest trees. His flesh is known to be very white and well flavoured; but he is hunted chiefly for the sake of his skin; the hair of which is very long, and of a fine light grey, but less esteemed than that of the fox.

THIS carnivorous and mischievous animal is a native of the frozen climates, where nature affording few vegetables, seems to compel all animals to eat

one another. In warmer climates he has lost much of his original beauty, and his fur is not so fine. In the north, it has remained long, soft and full, sometimes white, sometimes brown, and often red or sandy. The finest of any is that which is black; but this is more scarce in Canada than in Muscovy, which lies further north, and is not so damp.

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BESIDES these smaller furs, North-America supplies us with skins of the stag, the deer, and the roe-buck, of the moose-deer, called there Caribou; and of the elk, which is called Orignal. These two last kinds, which in our hemisphere are only found towards the polar circle, the elk on this side, and the moose-deer beyond, are to be met with in America in more southern latitudes. This may be owing to the cold being more intense in America, from singular causes which make an exception to the general law of nature; or, possibly, because these fresh lands are less frequented by destructive man. Their strong, soft, and warm skins make excellent garments, which are very light. All these animals are hunted by the Europeans; but the savages have reserved the chase of the bear to themselves, it being their favourite sport, and best adapted to their warlike manners, their strength and their bravery, and especially to their wants.

IN a cold and severe climate, the bear is most commonly black. As he is rather shy than fierce, instead of a cavern, he chuses for his lurking-place the hollow rotten trunk of an old tree. There he fixes himself in winter, as high as he can climb. As he is very fat at the end of autumn, very much covered with hair, takes no exercise, and is

almost always asleep, he must lose but little by perspiration, and consequently must seldom want to go abroad in quest of food. But he is forced out of his retreat by setting fire to it; and as soon as he attempts to come down, he falls under a shower of arrows before he can reach the ground. The Indians feed upon his flesh, rub themselves with his grease, and clothe themselves with his skin. Such was the design of their pursuit after the bear, when a new interest directed them towards the beaver.

THIS animal possesses all the friendly dispositions fit for society, without being subject, as we are, to the vices or misfortunes attendant upon it. Formed by nature for social life, he is endued with an instinct adapted to the preservation and propagation of his species. This animal, whose tender plaintive accents, and whose striking example, draw tears of admiration and pity from the humane philosopher, who contemplates his life and manners; this harmless animal, who never hurts any living creature, neither carnivorous nor sanguinary, is become the object of man's most earnest pursuit, and the one which the savages hunt after with the greatest eagerness and cruelty: a circumstance owing to the unmerciful rapaciousness of the most polished nations of Europe.

THE beaver is about three or four feet long, but his weight amounts to forty or sixty pounds, which is the consequence of the largeness of his muscles. His head, which he carries downwards, is like that of a rat, and his back raised in an arch above it like that of a mouse. Lucretius has observed,

not that man has hands given him to make use of them, but that he had hands given him, and has made use of them. Thus the beaver has webs at his hinder feet, and he swims with them. The toes of his fore-feet are separate, and answer the purpose of hands; the tail, which is flat, oval, and covered with scales, he uses to carry loads and to work with; he has four sharp incisors or cutting teeth, which serve him instead of carpenters tools. All these instruments, which are in a manner useless while he lives alone, and do not then distinguish him from other animals, are of infinite service when he lives in society, and enable him to display a degree of ingenuity superior to all instinct.

WITHOUT passions, without a desire of doing injury to any, and without craft, when he does not live in society, he scarcely ventures to defend himself. He never bites unless he is caught. But in the social state, in lieu of weapons, he has a variety of contrivances to secure himself without fighting, and to live without committing or suffering any injury. This peaceable and even tame animal is nevertheless independent; he is a slave to none, because all his wants are supplied by himself: he enters into society, but will not serve, nor does he pretend to command: and all his labours are directed by a silent instinct.

It is the common want of subsistence and propagation that calls the beavers home, and collects them together in summer to build their towns against winter. As early as June or July, they come in from all quarters, and assemble to the num-

ber of two or three hundred; but always by the water-side, because these republicans are to live on the water, to secure themselves from invasion. Sometimes they give the preference to still lakes in unfrequented districts, because there the waters are always at an equal height. When they find no pools of standing water, they make one in the midst of rivers or streams, by means of a causeway or dam. The very plan of this contrivance implies such a complication of ideas, as our short-sighted reason would be apt to think above any capacity but that of an intelligent being. The first thing to be erected is a pile a hundred feet long, and twelve feet thick at the basis, which shelves away to two or three feet in a slope answerable to the depth of the waters. To save work, or to facilitate their labour, they chuse the shallowest part of the river. If they find a large tree by the water-side, they fell it, so that it falls across the stream. If it should be larger in circumference than a man's body, they saw it through, or rather gnaw the foot with their four sharp teeth. The branches are soon lopped off by these industrious workmen, who want to fashion it into a beam. A number of smaller trees are felled and prepared for the intended pile. Some drag these trees to the river side, others swim over with them to the place where the causeway is to be raised. But the question is, how these animals are to sink them in the water with the assistance only of their teeth, tail, and feet: their contrivance is this. With their nails they dig a hole in the ground, or at the bottom of the water, With their teeth they

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rest the large end of the stake against the bank of the river, or against the great beam that lies across. With their feet they raise the stake and sink it with the sharp end downwards into the hole, where it stands upright. With their tails they make mortar, with which they fill up all the vacancies between the stakes, which are bound together with twisted boughs; and thus the pile is constructed. The slope of the dam is opposite to the current, to break more effectually the force of the water by a gradual resistance, and the stakes are driven in obliquely, in proportion to the inclination of the plane. The stakes are planted perpendicularly on the side where the water is to fall; and, in order to open a drain which may lessen the effect of the slope and weight of the causeway, they make two or three openings at the top of it, by which part of the waters of the river may run off.

WHEN this work is finished by the whole body of the republic, every member considers of a lodging for himself. Each company builds a hut in the water upon the pile. These huts are from four to ten feet in diameter, upon an oval or round spot. Some are two or three stories high, according to the number of families or households. Each hut contains at least two or three, and some ten or fifteen. The walls, whether high or low, are about two feet thick, and are all arched at the top, and perfectly neat and solid both within and without. They are varnished with a kind of stucco, impenetrable by the water and by the external air. Every apartment has two openings, one on the land side, to enable them to go out and fetch provisions;

sions; the others on that next the stream, to facilitate their escape, at the approach of the enemy, that is, of man, the destroyer of cities and commonwealths. The window of the house opens to the water. There they take the fresh air in the day-time, plunged into the river up to their middle. In winter it serves to fence them against the ice, which collects to the thickness of two or three feet. The shelf, intended to prevent the ice from stopping up this window, rests upon two stakes that slope so as to carry off the water from the house, and leave an outlet to escape, or to go and swim under the ice. The inside of the house has no other furniture than a flooring of grass, covered with the boughs of the fir-tree. No filth of any kind is ever seen in these apartments.

THE materials for these buildings are always to be found in their neighbourhood. These are alders, poplars, and other trees, delighting in watery places, as these republicans do who build their apartments of them. These citizens have the satisfaction, at the same time that they fashion the wood, to nourish themselves with it. Like certain savages of the frozen ocean, they eat the bark. The savages, indeed, do not like it till it is dried, pounded, and properly dressed; whereas the beavers chew it, and suck it when it is quite green. They lay up a provision of bark and tender twigs in separate store houses for every hut, proportionable to the number of its inhabitants. Every beaver knows his own storehouse, and not one of them steals from that of his neighbour. Each party live in their own habitation, and are contented

tented with it, though jealous of the property they have acquired in it by their labour. The provisions of the community are collected and expended without any contest. They are satisfied with that simple food which their labour prepares for them. The only passion they have is that of conjugal affection, the basis and end of which is the increase of their species. Towards the end of winter, the mothers bring forth their young ones, which have been conceived in autumn; and while the father ranges all the woods, allured by the sweets of the spring, leaving to his little family the room he took up in his narrow cell, the mother suckles and nurses them, to the number of two or three; then she takes them out along with her in her excursions, in search of cray and other fish, and green bark, to recruit her own strength, and to feed them, till the season of labour returns.

SUCH is the system of the republican, industrious, intelligent beaver, skilled in architecture, provident and systematical in its plans of police and society, whose gentle and instructive manners we have been describing. Happy, if his coat did not tempt merciless and savage man to destroy his buildings and his race. It has frequently happened, when the Americans have demolished the settlements of the beavers, those indefatigable animals have had the resolution to rebuild them in the very same situation for several summers successively. The winter is the time for attacking them. Experience then warns them of their danger. At the approach of the huntmen, one of them strikes a hard stroke with his tail upon the water; this
signal

signal spreads a general alarm throughout all the huts of the commonwealth, and every one tries to save himself under the ice. But it is very difficult to escape all the snares that are laid for this harmless tribe.

SOMETIMES the huntsmen lie in wait for them, but as these animals see and hear at a great distance, it seldom happens that they are shot by the water-side, and they never venture so far upon land as to be caught by surprise. If the beaver be wounded before he takes to the water, he has always time enough to plunge in; and, if he dies afterwards, he is lost, because he sinks, and never rises again.

A MORE certain way of catching beavers is, by laying traps in the woods, where they eat the tender bark of young trees. These traps are baited with fresh slips of wood, and as soon as the beavers touch them, a great weight falls and crushes their loins. The man, who is concealed near the place, hastens to it, seizes the animal, and having killed it, carries it off.

THERE are other methods more commonly and successfully practised. The huts are sometimes attacked, in order to drive out the inhabitants, who are watched at the edges of the holes that have been bored in the ice, where they cannot avoid coming to take in fresh air. The instant they appear, they are killed. At other times, the animal, driven out of his retreat, is entangled in the nets spread for some toises round his hut, the ice being broken for that purpose. If the whole colony is
 (c) to be taken at once, instead of breaking down
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the sluices to drown the inhabitants, a scheme, that might, perhaps, be tried with effect in Holland, the causeway is opened, in order to drain off the water from the pool where the beavers live. When they are thus left dry, defenceless, and unable to escape, they may be caught at pleasure, and destroyed at any time; but care is always taken to leave a sufficient number of males and females to preserve the breed; an act of generosity, which in reality proceeds only from avarice. The cruel foresight of man only spares a few in order to have the more to destroy. The beaver, whose plaintive cry seems to implore his clemency and pity, finds in the savage, rendered cruel by the Europeans, only an implacable enemy, whose enterprises are undertaken, not so much to supply his own wants, as to furnish superfluities to another world.

IF we compare the manners, the police, and the industry of the beavers, with the wandering life of the savages of Canada; we shall be inclined to admit, making allowance for the superiority of man's faculties above those of animals, that the beaver was much further advanced in the arts of social life, than his pursuer, when the Europeans first brought their talents and improvements to North-America.

THE beaver, an older inhabitant of that world than man, and the quiet possessor of regions so well adapted to his species, had employed that tranquillity he had enjoyed for many ages, in the improvement of his faculties. In our hemisphere, man has seized upon the most wholesome and fertile regions, and has driven out or subdued all
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other animals. If the bee and the ant have preserved their laws and government from the jealous and destructive dominion of tyrant man, it has been owing to the smallness of their size. It is thus we see some republics in Europe, without splendour or strength, maintain themselves by their very weakness, in the midst of vast monarchies, which must sooner or later swallow them up. But the social quadrupeds, banished into uninhabited climates, unfit for their increase, have been unconnected in all places, incapable of uniting into a community, or of improving their natural sagacity; while man, who has reduced them to that precarious state, exults in their degradation, and sets a high value on that superior nature and those rational powers, which constitute a perpetual distinction between his species and all others.

BRUTES, we are told, bring nothing to perfection: their operations, therefore, can only be mechanical, and do not imply any principle similar to that which actuates man. Without examining in what perfection consists; whether the most civilized being is in reality the most perfect; whether he does not lose in the property of his person what he acquires in the property of things; or, whether what is added to his enjoyments is not so much subtracted from his duration: it must be acknowledged, that the beaver, which in Europe is a wandering, solitary, timorous and stupid animal, was in Canada acquainted with civil and domestic government; knew how to distinguish the proper seasons for labour and rest, was acquainted with some rules

rules of architecture, and with the curious and learned art of constructing dikes; yet he had attained the assistance of this degree of improvement with feeble and imperfect tools. He can hardly see the work he performs with his tail. His teeth, which answer the purposes of a variety of tools, are circular, and confined by the lips. Man, on the contrary, with hands fit for every purpose, hath in this single organ of the touch all the combined powers of strength and dexterity. Is it not to this advantage of organization that he owes the superiority of his species above all others? It is not because his eyes are turned towards heaven, as those of all birds are, that he is the lord of the creation; it is because he is provided with hands, capable of every exertion, and of adapting themselves to every species of industry; hands, ever ready to strike terror into his enemies, to defend or to assist him. His hand is his scepter, that arm which he lifts up to heaven, to find out, as it were, his origin; he, at the same time, marks his dominion with it over the earth, by destroying and ravaging the face of the globe. The surest sign of the population of mankind is the depopulation of other species. That of beavers gradually decreases and disappears in Canada, since the Europeans have been in quest of their skins.

THEIR skins vary with the climate, both in colour and quality. In the same district, however, where the colonies of civilized beavers are found, there are some that are wild and solitary. These animals, who are said to be expelled the society
for

for their ill behaviour, live in a subterraneous retreat, and have neither lodging nor storehouse. These are called earth beavers. Their coat is dirty, and the hair on their backs is worn off by rubbing against the cave which they dig for their habitation. The hole they make, and which commonly opens into some pond or ditch full of water, sometimes extends above a hundred feet in length, and rises gradually in a slope to facilitate their escape from inundations when the waters swell. Some of these beavers are so wild as to disclaim all communication with their natural element, and live entirely on land. In this they resemble our otters in Europe. These wild beavers have not such sleek hair as those that live in societies; their furs are answerable to their manners.

BEAVERS are found in America from the thirtieth to the sixtieth degree of north latitude. There are but few towards the south; but they increase in number, and grow darker, as we advance towards the north. In the country of the Illinois, they are yellow and straw-coloured; higher up in the country, they are of a light-chestnut; to the north of Canada, of a dark-chestnut; and some are found that are quite black, and these are reckoned the finest. Yet in this climate, the coldest that is inhabited by this species, some among the black tribes are quite white; others white speckled with grey, and sometimes with sandy spots on the rump: so much does nature delight in shewing the gradations of warmth and cold, and their various influences, not only on the figure, but on the

very covering of animals. The value that is set upon them depends upon the colour of their skins. Some of them are so little in esteem, that it is not thought worth while to kill them; but these are not commonly found.

THE fur trade was the first the Europeans carried on in Canada. It was begun by the French colony at Tadoussac, a port situated thirty leagues below Quebec. About the year 1640, the town of Les Trois Rivières at the distance of twenty-five leagues above the capital became a second mart. In process of time all the fur trade centered in Montreal. The skins were brought thither on canoes made of the bark of trees in the month of June. The number of Indians who resorted to that place increased, as the fame of the French spread further. The account of the reception they had met with, the sight of the things they had received in exchange for their goods, all contributed to increase this traffic. Whenever they returned with a fresh supply of furs, they always brought a new nation along with them. Thus a kind of fair was opened, to which the several tribes of that vast continent resorted.

In what places, and in what manner the fur trade was carried on.

THE English grew jealous of this branch of wealth; and the colony they had founded at New York, soon found means to divert the stream of this great circulation. As soon as they had secured a subsistence, by bestowing their first attention upon agriculture, they began to think of the fur trade, which was at first confined to the country of the Iroquois. The five nations of that name,

would not suffer their lands to be traversed, in order to give an opportunity of treating with other savage nations, who were at constant enmity with them; nor would they allow those nations to come upon their territories, to share in competition with them the profits of the trade they had opened with the Europeans. But time having extinguished, or rather suspended, the national hostilities between the Indians, the English spread themselves over the country, and the savages flocked to them from all quarters. This nation had infinite advantages to give them the preference to their rivals the French. Their voyages were carried on with greater facility, and consequently they could afford to undersell them. They were the only manufacturers of the coarse cloths that were most suitable to the savages. The beaver trade was free among them; whereas among the French, it was and ever has been subject to the tyranny of monopoly. It was by this freedom and these privileges, that they engrossed most of the trade that rendered Montreal so famous.

At this time the French in Canada indulged themselves more freely in a custom, which at first had been confined within narrow bounds. Their inclination for frequenting the woods, which was that of the first colonists, had been wisely restrained within the limits of the territory belonging to the colony. Permission was, however, granted every year to twenty-five persons to go beyond these limits in order to trade with the Indians. The superiority which New York was acquiring, was the cause

cause of increasing the number of these permissions. They were a kind of patents, which the patentees might make use of either in person or by proxy, and continued a year or more. The produce of the sale of these patents was assigned by the governor of the colony, to the officers, or their widows and children, to hospitals and missionaries, to such as had distinguished themselves by some great action, or some useful undertaking; and sometimes even to the creatures of the governor who sold the patents himself. The money, he did not give away, or did not chuse to keep, was put into the public coffers; but he was not accountable to any one for the management of it.

THIS custom was attended with fatal consequences. Many of these traders settled among the Indians, to defraud their partners, whose goods they had disposed of. A greater number settled among the English, where the profits were greater. The immense lakes, frequently agitated with violent storms; the cascades, which render navigation so dangerous up the broadest rivers in the whole world; the weight of the canoes, the provisions, and the bales of goods, which they were forced to carry upon their shoulders at the *carrying places*, where the rapidity or shallowness of the water obliged them to quit the rivers, and pursue their journey by land, proved the destruction of several persons. Some perished in the snow and on the ice, by hunger or by the sword of the enemy. Those who returned to the colony with a profit of six or seven hundred *per cent.* were not always

on that account more useful members, as they gave themselves up to the greatest excesses, and by their example produced in others a dislike to attention and industry. Their fortunes were dissipated as suddenly as they were amassed; like those moving mountains which a whirlwind raises and destroys at once, on the sandy plains of Africa. Most of these travelling traders, exhausted with the excessive fatigues which their avarice prompted them to undergo, and the licentiousness of a wandering and dissolute life, dragged on a premature old age in indigence and infamy. The government took cognizance of these irregularities, and changed the manner of carrying on the fur trade.

THE French had for a long time been incessantly employed in erecting a number of forts, which were thought necessary for the preservation and aggrandizement of their settlements in North America. Those built on the west and south of the river St. Lawrence were large and strong, and were intended to restrain the ambition of the English. Those which were constructed on the several lakes in the most important positions, formed a chain which extended northward to the distance of a thousand leagues from Quebec; but they were only miserable pallisades, intended to keep the Indians in awe, to secure their alliance, and the produce of their chase. There was a garrison in each, more or less numerous, according to the importance of the port, and of the enemies who threatened it. It was thought proper to intrust the commandant of each of these forts with the exclusive

five right of buying and selling in the whole district under his dominion. This privilege was purchased; but as it was always advantageous, and sometimes was the means of acquiring a considerable fortune, it was only granted to officers that were most in favour. If any of these had not a stock sufficient for the undertaking, he could easily prevail with some monied men to join with him. It was pretended that this system, far from being detrimental to the service, was a means of promoting it, as it obliged the military men to keep up more constant connections with the natives, to watch their motions, and to neglect nothing that could secure their friendship. It was not foreseen, or at least pretended not to be so by any, that such an arrangement must necessarily prevail over every principle, except that of interest, and would be a source of perpetual oppression.

THIS tyranny, which soon became universal, was severely felt at Frontenac, at Niagara, and at Toronto. The farmers of those three forts, making an ill use of their exclusive privilege, set so low a value upon the merchandise that was brought them, and rated their own so high, that by degrees the Indians, instead of stopping there, resorted in great numbers to Chouaguen, on the lake Ontario, where the English traded with them upon more advantageous terms. The French court, alarmed at the account of these new connections, found means to weaken them, by taking the trade of these three posts into their own hands, and treating the In-

dians still better than they were treated by their rivals the English.

IN consequence of this step, the refuse of all those furs that were not saleable became the sole property of the king; and all the skins of those beasts that were killed in summer and autumn were readily given him; in a word, all the most ordinary furs, the thinnest, and most easily spoiled, were reserved for the king. All these damaged furs, bought without examination, were carelessly deposited in warehouses, and eaten up by the moths. At the proper season for sending them to Quebec, they were put into boats, and left to the discretion of soldiers, passengers, and watermen, who, having had no concern in those commodities, did not take the least care to keep them dry. When they came into the hands of the managers of the colony, they were sold for one half of the small value they had. Thus the returns were rather less than the sums advanced by the government in support of this losing trade.

BUT though this trade was of no consequence to the king, it is still a matter of doubt if it were advantageous to the Indians, though gold and silver were not the dangerous medium of their traffic. They received, indeed, in exchange for their furs, saws, knives, hatchets, kettles, fish-hooks, needles, thread, ordinary linen, coarse woollen stuffs; all which may be considered as the means or pledges of intercourse with them. But articles were likewise sold them that would have proved prejudicial

to them even as a gift or a present ; such as guns, powder and shot, tobacco, and especially brandy.

BOOK
XV.

THIS liquor, the most fatal present the old world ever made to the new, was no sooner known to the savages, than they grew passionately fond of it. It was equally impossible for them to abstain from it, or to use it with moderation. It was soon observed that it disturbed their domestic peace, deprived them of their judgment, and made them furious ; and that it occasioned husbands, wives, children, brothers and sisters, to abuse and quarrel with one another. In vain did some worthy Frenchmen expostulate with them, and endeavour to make them ashamed of these excesses. It is you, answered they, who have taught us to drink this liquor ; and now we cannot do without it. If you refuse to give it us, we will apply to the English. You have done the mischief, and it admits not of a remedy.

THE court of France, upon receiving contradictory information with respect to the disorders occasioned by this pernicious trade, hath alternately prohibited, tolerated, and authorised it, according to the light in which it was represented to the ministry. Notwithstanding all these various alterations, the interest of the merchants was nearly the same. The sale of brandy was seldom decreased. It was, however, considered by judicious people, as the principal cause of the diminution of the human race, and consequently that of the skins of beasts ; a diminution which became every day more evident.

THIS decline of the fur trade was not yet so remarkable as it has been since, when the promotion of the duke of Anjou to the throne of Charles V. spread an alarm over all Europe, and plunged it once more into the horrors of a general war. The conflagration extended beyond the seas, and was advancing even to Canada, had not the Iroquois put a stop to it. The English and French had long been contending to secure an alliance with that nation. These marks of esteem or fear, had so far increased their natural pride, that they considered themselves as the umpires of the two rival nations, and pretended that the conduct of both was to be regulated by their interest. As they were inclined to peace at that time, they haughtily declared that they would take up arms against either of the two nations, which should commence hostilities against the other. This resolution was favourable to the situation of the French colony, which was ill prepared for a war, and expected no assistance from the mother-country. The people of New York, on the contrary, whose forces were already considerable, and received daily reinforcements, wished to prevail upon the Iroquois to join with them. Their insinuations, presents, and negotiations were, however, ineffectual till 1709: at which period they succeeded in seducing the five nations; and their troops, which till then had remained inactive, marched out supported by a great number of Indian warriors.

THE army was confidently advancing towards the center of Canada with the greatest probability of

of success, when one of the chiefs of the Iroquois, who had never approved of their proceedings, plainly said to his people, "What will become of us if we should succeed in driving away the French?" These few words, uttered with a mysterious and anxious look, immediately recalled to the minds of all the people their former system, which was to keep the balance even between the two foreign nations, in order to secure their own independence. They instantly resolved to relinquish a design they had been too precipitately engaged in, contrary to the public interest; but, as they thought it would be shameful openly to desert their associates, they imagined that secret treachery might serve the purpose of open defection. The lawless savages, the virtuous Spartans, the religious Hebrews, the wise and warlike Greeks and Romans; all people, whether civilized or not, have always made what is called the right of nations consist either in craft or violence.

THE army had halted on the banks of a little river to wait for the artillery and ammunition. The Iroquois, who spent their leisure hours in hunting, flayed all the beasts they caught, and threw their skins into the river, a little above the camp. The waters were soon infected. The English, who had not any suspicion of such an instance of treachery, continued unfortunately to drink of the waters that were thus rendered poisonous; in consequence of which, such considerable numbers of them immediately died, that it became necessary to suspend the military operations.

A still

A still more imminent danger threatened the French colony. A numerous fleet destined against Quebec, entered the river St. Lawrence the following year, and would probably have succeeded, had it reached the place of its destination. But the rashness of the admiral joined to the violence of the elements, was the cause of its being lost in the river. Thus was Canada at once delivered from its fears both by sea and land, and had the glory of maintaining itself without succours and without loss, against the strength and policy of the English.

France is compelled to cede part of the provinces that were united to Canada.

FRANCE, however, which for forty years had singly withstood the combined efforts of all Europe, vanquished or repulsed all the nations united against her, gained that point under Lewis XIV. which Charles V. had not been able to do with the innumerable troops of his several kingdoms: France, which had at that period produced as many great men as would have rendered immortal a series of twenty reigns, and under one in particular had signalized herself by as many great actions as might have raised the glory of twenty different nations, was then upon the point of crowning all its glorious successes by placing a branch of the house of Bourbon on the throne of Spain. She had then fewer enemies and a greater number of allies than she ever had in the most brilliant periods of her prosperity. Every thing concurred to promise her an easy success, a speedy and decisive superiority.

It was not fortune but nature itself that changed her destiny. Proud and flourishing under a king endowed with the graces and vigour of youth, after having risen with him through the several degrees of glory and grandeur, she sank with him through all the periods of decay incident to human nature. The spirit of bigotry, which had been introduced into the court by an ambitious woman, determined the choice of ministers, generals, and governors; and this choice was always blind and unfortunate. Kings, who, like other men, have recourse to heaven when they are ready to quit the earth, seem in their old age to seek for a new set of flatterers, who sooth them with hopes, at the time when all realities are disappearing. It is at this time that hypocrisy, always ready to avail itself of the first and second childhood of life, awakens in the soul the ideas that had been early implanted in it; and, under pretence of guiding the man to the only happiness that remains for him, assumes an absolute empire over his will. But as this last age, as well as the first, is a state of weakness, a continual fluctuation must, therefore, prevail in the government. Cabals grow more violent and more powerful than ever; the expectations of intriguing men are raised; and merit is less rewarded; men of superior talents are afraid to make themselves known; solicitations of every kind are multiplied; places are casually bestowed upon men all equally unfit to fill them; and yet, presumptuous enough to think they deserve them;

them; men who rate the estimation of themselves by the contempt they entertain for others. The nation then loses its strength, with its confidence, and every thing is carried on with the same spirit it was undertaken; that is, without design, vigour, or prudence.

To raise a country from a state of barbarism, to maintain it in the height of its glory, and to check the rapidity of its decline, are three objects very difficult to accomplish; but the last is certainly the most arduous task of them all. A nation rises out of barbarism by sudden efforts exerted at intervals; it supports itself at the summit of its prosperity by the powers it has acquired; it declines in consequence of an universal languor, which has been brought on by almost imperceptible gradations. Barbarous nations require a long continued reign; but short reigns are best calculated to maintain a state in its prosperity. But the long dotage of a declining monarch lays the foundation of evils for his successor, which it is almost impossible to remedy.

SUCH was the latter part of the reign of Lewis XIV. After a series of defeats and mortifications, he was still happy that he could purchase peace by sacrifices which made his humiliation evident. But he seemed to wish to conceal these sacrifices from his people, by making them chiefly beyond sea. It is easy to judge how much his pride must have suffered, in giving up to the English

lish Hudson's-bay, Newfoundland, and Acadia, three possessions, which, together with Canada, formed that immense tract of country known by the glorious name of New France. We shall see in the next book by what means this power, accustomed to conquest, endeavoured to repair its losses.

BOOK
XV.
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